

A COMPLEAT  
COLLECTION  
OF THE  
SERMONS,  
TRACTS,

AND  
PIECES of all KINDS,

That were Written by

The RIGHT REVEREND  
Dr. WILLIAM FLEETWOOD, <sup>K</sup>

Late Lord Bishop of *ELT*.

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LONDON:

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A COMPENDIUM

COLLECTION

OF THE

SERMONS

PREACHED

AT THE



DR WILLIAM ALBERT WOOD

Late Lord Bishop of Bath

LONDON

Printed for D. Milnes, 15, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.  
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# P R E F A C E.

**M**ANY Gentlemen having expressed a Desire to have all Bishop FLEETWOOD's Writings collected together in one Volume, several of which would otherwise be in Danger of being lost in a few Years, most of them being very short Discourses, and many without his Name to them; the Booksellers interested in the several Copies resolved to gratify the Curious in so reasonable a Desire, being persuaded, that in doing so, they at the same Time gratify the Publick, and do a Service to their Country; the Writings of this worthy Prelate being, many of them, upon Subjects in which the publick Welfare is greatly concerned, and all of them in general extremely useful in the Conduct of private Life, and for the Good of Society; all written in a most beautiful Style, and most engaging Manner, and in a Way almost peculiar to their Author, who was so excellent a Person, and so eminent in all good Qualities, that his Name alone must make those who are as yet unacquainted with his Writings, conceive a high Opinion of them; there being no one who has more steadily and uniformly shewn himself through the whole Course of his Life, and in every Station of it, as well as in his Writings, in the true Interest of his Country, and as the only Way to secure it, for the Protestant Succession, and the House of HANOVER; a hearty Friend himself to the whole Constitution in Church and State; and those who are so, he always thought the truest Friends to the present happy Settlement.

To preserve the Writings of so fine a Pen, and of a Person of so excellent a Character, is the Design of this Collection; which coming to the Knowledge of a Gentleman who had the Honour to be many Years intimately acquainted with the Bishop, and retains the greatest Veneration for his Memory, he thought it would not be unacceptable to his Readers to have some short Account of his Life prefixed to his Works, and accordingly sent this following.

**T**HE Excellent Prelate, whose Writings are now first collected together into One Volume, was born in the Tower of London on New Year's Day 1656, descended from an ancient Family in Lancashire, where he had an Estate, now in the Possession of his Son: He was educated at Eton School, and from thence elected into King's College, Cambridge, 1675. About the Time of the Revolution, He entered into Holy Orders, and commenced a celebrated Preacher at his

I first



first setting out: Having preached the Anniversary Sermon on the Founder's Day before the University in his own College, *Lady-day* 1689, it fell to his Turn to preach before them on the *Sunday* following at St. *Mary's*, when the Vice-chancellor and Heads of Colleges did him the Honour to desire him to print both Sermons: but he declining one Part of that Honour, printed only the first of them. He was soon after made Chaplain to King *William* and Queen *Mary*; and by the Interest of his worthy Friend Dr. *Godolphin*, late Provost of *Eton*, and Dean of St. *Paul's* (at that Time Vice-Provost of one, and Residentiary of the other) he was made Fellow of that College, and Rector of St. *Austin's*, *London*, which is in the Gift of the Dean and Chapter of St. *Paul's*. His own great Merit brought him soon after into the Lecture of St. *Dunstan's*. These were all the Preferments he had during King *William's* Reign, having received no Recompence for his long Service and Attendance as Chaplain, till within a Week of that Prince's Death, when he was nominated by the King to a Canonry of *Windsor*, at the Recommendation of the late Lord *Godolphin*. The Grant having not passed the Seals before the King's Death, the House of Commons addressed the Queen to give that Canonry to their Chaplain; but that Affair having been opened to the Queen by the Lord *Godolphin*, she was pleased to say, *If the King had given it to Mr. Fleetwood, he should have it.* It often puzzled his Friends to find a Reason why he was so long neglected by the Bishops and those great Men, who were entrusted with the Disposal of the Ecclesiastical Preferments in that King's Reign. Perhaps from his retired Manner of Life, and his appearing seldom or never in Places of publick Resort, they had conceived some Doubt of his Principles in relation to the Government, as it afterwards appeared some in the City had done for no better Reasons; of which he takes notice in his famous Preface: But let the Cause be what it will, it is most certain he never entertained any Notions against the Interest or Liberty of his Country. He was hearty and zealous for the Constitution, in which the Revolution and the subsequent Settlements of the Succession to the Crown left the State, (as his first Preface to the Sermon on the Duke of *Gloucester's* Death, and his two Sermons on the 30th of *January*, shew:) And as for the established Church, his three several Charges to his Clergy do sufficiently attest his Attachment to that. He was for the Protestant Succession's taking place in its due Time, (witness his Defence of *Lay-Baptism*, and afterwards his famous Preface.) He was for supporting the House of *Hanover* on the Throne, when they were come to it, (as his Sermon at *Ely-House* on the Thanksgiving for the Suppression of the Rebellion, testifies.) He stood firm to the Exclusion our Laws had

made



made of Papists from the Throne, and was always quick to observe and to expose the Attempts, whether covertly or openly made to conciliate the Nation to that Line, (as besides those I have mentioned, his Preface to *the Life of St. Wenefrede*, and other Pieces, written at proper Seasons, shew.) In short, he never had but one and the same Judgment of Matters with Relation to the Government, as will very fully appear by a Passage taken out of one of his Sermons, preached before the Lord Mayor so early as 1692. The Passage runs thus: " Here likewise are  
 " the Laws and Government so famous over all the World for Liberty  
 " without Licentiousness, for Monarchy without Tyranny, and for  
 " Subjection without Slavery: Here are the Fortunes and Estates the  
 " best secured that can be, not subject to the Assessment or Taxation of  
 " an arbitrary lawless Prince alone, whose Vanity or Folly, bad Designs  
 " or Wantonness, might drain the labouring industrious Subject; nor  
 " yet so much the private Master's own, as that he should deny the Use  
 " of what the Publick finds is necessary to discharge its Duty. Here,  
 " lastly, are the Cities of our God, the best Religion in the World,  
 " founded and built upon the Laws of God, and established by those of  
 " the Land. "

If this be Disaffection, may it increase under the Shelter of his Name, and shed its kindly Influence over all the Nation! But two of those Bishops, if they once thought not so well of him as he deserved, lived long enough to see their Mistake; they acknowledged his great Merit, and gave him frequent Testimonies of a sincere and valuable Friendship to the End of their Lives: Dr. *Tenison* in particular, late Archbishop of *Canterbury*, whose uniform Life and steady Principles have endeared his Memory to every good Protestant, took much Pains to fix him in the See of *Ely*, upon the Death of the late Queen, 1714.

About the Year 1705, he took a Resolution to retire from the Noise and Hurry of the City, much to the Grief and Concern of his Friends and Admirers there: His Parishioners of *St. Austin's* were so sensibly affected at the Thought of losing him, that they made very moving Applications to him, to continue longer among them: They offered to keep a Curate for him at their own Expence, and to come into any Measures that would make him easy; but nothing could divert him from a Resolution that had been long and deeply grounded in his Mind: He gave up his Preferments in the City, and withdrew to *Wexham*, a small Rectory of about 60 *l.* a Year in *Buckinghamshire*, where he enjoyed the Ease and Sweet of that Privacy he had so much longed for, in a neat commodious House and Gardens; and that which made his Retirement



more agreeable to him, was its Nearness to his beloved *Eton*. But this humble Man did not long enjoy his pleasing Retreat; the good Providence of God would not suffer so much Merit to lye buried in such Obscurity; but called him out again into the World, into a higher Station, the Bishoprick of St. *Asaph*, to which he was nominated by the Queen without any Knowledge or Solicitation of his own. He was but just gone out from waiting as Chaplain, when Bishop *Beveridge* died; upon which, one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber asking the Queen, whom she intended to make Bishop of St. *Asaph*, Her Majesty replied, "One whom you will be pleased with, whom you lately heard preach, I intend it for Dr. FLEETWOOD;" and immediately ordered him to be sent for to Court. It was this Circumstance, his having been called to that Bishoprick by the Queen's own Choice, that greatly contributed, as himself said to some of his Friends, to conquer the Aversion he had expressed against returning again into the World: He thought he saw the Hand of God in it, and so submitted, and was consecrated June 6. 1708.

Here he had a very difficult Part to act, coming into this Diocese but just before that Spirit of Rage and Madness broke out in 1710, which continued to the End of the Queen's Reign, when Party-Rage ran higher, and the Spirit of *Jacobitism* was more insolent and barefaced, than in any former Time, since the Revolution; and more in that Part of the Kingdom than in most others; yet his great and clear Reputation, his uncommon Abilities and unblemished Life, which set off the Episcopal Character with much Lustre; his obliging and easy Deportment, free from the least Tincture of Pride, or shew of Superiority, did not only place him above all indecent Treatment, which was a great Point gained in those *unequal* Times, but procured much Reverence and Affection to his Person from a Clergy, that almost to a Man differed from him in Principle.

When that unhappy Change was made in the Queen's Measures, that blasted all the Glories and the Triumphs of the eight preceding Years, our Bishop, who was a steady Friend to the *Old Ministry*, because he saw they had served their Country well and faithfully, could not be drawn to give any Countenance to the Measures of the *New One*, though Endeavours had been used, and Intimations given by the Queen herself, who had a great Value for him, how pleasing his frequent Coming to Court would be to Her. But his Sentiments will best appear from his own Words, in a Letter to a Friend, to whom he used to speak and write his Mind freely. "When my Duty to the Queen, and the Good of my Country will permit it, my Gratitude will never let me vote  
" against



## P R E F A C E.

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“ against my Friends; when I have saved my Conscience, I give my-  
 “ self up to what I call my Honour; and therefore under all the Dif-  
 “ couragements I can be, I shall always be on the Side of the late Mi-  
 “ nistry, because I know they served the Queen and Nation so well,  
 “ that I am morally assured they never will be served better; and when-  
 “ ever they are, I shall certainly be on their Side who do that Service:  
 “ I think I may be allowed to act as clear and disinterested a Part as  
 “ any Man of our Order; for sure, if I could shift my Side, I might  
 “ be well accepted, considering what Relation I have had to one,  
 “ (the Earl of *Rochester*) who governs all, and who is very civil to me  
 “ upon all Occasions; but the Measures we are in are by no Means  
 “ pleasing to me, as what will never do the Nation’s Business; and I  
 “ foresee that all our Millions and our Blood spent for these twenty  
 “ Years past, will end in a despicable Peace, which yet we must pitiful-  
 “ ly sue for too”. When he was asked about two Years after this, his  
 Opinion of the Situation of our publick Affairs, his Answer was, “ I  
 “ have been, and am still in so ill Humour with relation to them, that  
 “ I hardly can endure to think of them. We were in the greatest Ho-  
 “ nour abroad of any Nation in the Earth, we are now the Scorn of  
 “ all People: Our Friends hate us, and our Enemies laugh at us. We  
 “ shall neither have a good Peace nor a good War; *France* will not give  
 “ us the first, and we ourselves have cut off the Means of the last. The  
 “ Disgrace of the Duke of *Marlborough* was worth a Million at least, and  
 “ yet I do not hear we got a Farthing by it; which I impute not to our  
 “ Honesty and Virtue, but to our Folly, Malice, Infatuation, and the  
 “ great Haste we are in to be undone. The Parliament has passed such  
 “ a Censure upon the Duke, that I dare aver no equal Number of Men  
 “ in all the World, of what Nation or Religion soever, would have  
 “ done. But the laying him aside is so strange a Thing, that People  
 “ are put to all their Shifts to account for it; and to make it go down  
 “ with the World, must invent, exaggerate, and say and do any Thing,  
 “ to make him appear worthy of such Usage; but I expect it will turn  
 “ to his Enemies Mischief, as it certainly does to his Honour, that  
 “ after so keen and malicious an Inquisition into his Conduct, their  
 “ great Master should be able to accuse him of nothing, but of doing  
 “ what all Generals have done before him, and what King *William*  
 “ always did.”

In *May* 1712, he published four Sermons with that famous Preface  
 before them, which was ordered to be burnt by a Vote of the Majority  
 of the House of Commons: A Vote, that it is hardly possible to believe  
 any other Set of Men but those who had thrown off all Regard to the  
 Honour



Honour of their Country, could have been brought into; but not at all to be wondred at by any one, who knows it was passed by those very Men who gave a Sanction to those destructive Measures that produced the dishonourable Peace of *Utrecht*; a Name that, as often as it is mentioned, cannot fail to raise a due Degree of Indignation in every honest Breast against those Hands and Heads that treated away the Liberties of *Europe*. But take his Sense of these Matters in his own Words, in a Letter of his to Bishop *Burnet*, a Copy of which his Son *Thomas Burnet*, Esq; lately obliged me with.

MY LORD,

June the 17<sup>th</sup>, 1712.

**I** Received the Favour of your Lordship's Letter, and took it, as I know it was intended, very kindly. The Manner of my receiving the Indignity put upon my Preface, was neither like a Christian nor Philosopher, but like a very worldly Man. I knew the whole Process, and knew it to be a Piece of Revenge taken by a wicked Party, that found themselves sorely stung; and it affected me accordingly, i. e. very little. I am not one that love to be the Talk of the Town, and in this Part I confess I was uneasy, although I think the Talk was very much in my Favour. The Complaint was made by Hungerford, and seconded by Manley, (People that should indeed have been ordered to have burnt it) and thirdered by what we call the Court, and carried by Numbers, without a wise Word said against it. Sir Peter King, Sir Joseph Jekyl, Mr. Lechmere, and others of the Robe, were very strenuous Advocates in its Behalf, and so were other Gentlemen, but to no Purpose, for the Court divided 119, and my Friends but 54. If their Design was to intimidate me, they have lost it utterly; or, if to suppress the Book, it happens much otherwise, for every Body's Curiosity is awakened by this Usage, and the Bookseller finds his Account in it, above any one else. The Spectator has conveyed above 14, 000 of them into other People's Hands, that would otherwise have never seen or heard of it. In a word, My Lord, when I consider that these Gentlemen have used me no worse than I think they have used their own Country, the Emperor, the States, the House of Hanover, and all our Allies abroad, as well as all the Bravest, Wisest, and Honestest Men we have at Home, I am more inclined to become vain, than any Ways depressed at what has befallen me, and intend to set up for a Man of Merit upon this very Stock. But Pleasantry apart, my Heart is wounded within me, when I consider seriously whereabouts we are, and whither we are tending. The Court Party do now own publickly, that except the Allies accept of the Conditions that are offered them, King Philip is not to make any Renunciation; and certainly the Allies cannot accept of those Condi-



# P R E F A C E.

vij

tions, unless they are distressed to the last Degree. We must and shall have a separate Peace in Spite of all that can be said, and that must be without a Renunciation on the Part of France, and without a Guaranty from the Allies; and what a Peace is that like to be? It is now said that England is to constrain the King of France to content the States with a Barrier to their liking, and that the rest will come in, or stand out without any Danger; but I am afraid England has lost all her constraining Power, and that France thinks she has us in her Hands, and may use us as she pleases, which I dare say, will be as scurvily as we deserve. What a Change has two Years made? Your Lordship may now imagine you are growing young again, for we are fallen, methinks, into the very Dregs of Charles the IIId's Politicks; saving that then they were more reasonable, because our Enemy was then in so full Power and Lustre, as might both terrify and dazzle a poor luxurious Prince, that would not be disturbed, nor seem to care much what became of England after he was gone. The present Times may put you in Mind of those, with this bad Difference still, that now the ruinous Effects of those Advices seem to be taking Place after an Interval of five or six and twenty Years; and after such an Interruption, as one would have thought should have quite baffled and destroyed them. I find, my Lord, upon reading my Letter, that I have entred upon deep Matters, which, considering the Times, and the Spaw Waters I have taken, I ought not to have done. You will, I hope, excuse me, for methought I was talking with you, who, I believe favour me. I have, I thank God, an entire Trust in his Goodness, and know he has hitherto preserved us beyond all reasonable Hopes, without and against all our Deservings; but will he still go on to save us against our Will, and in the Midst of our Endeavours to destroy ourselves? I hope he will, for else I think we are a lost People. I pray God to preserve your Lordship and all your Family. I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble Servant,

W. ASAPH.

The Revenge which the Bishop points at in his Letter, was dealt out to him in Remembrance of the Sermon which he had published a few Months before, against those that delight in War; in which he had set the base and ungenerous Treatment of the Bravest General, and the truest Patriots this Nation was ever blessed with, in a Light that cast much Infamy and Reproach upon their insolent Persecutors.



When he saw that happy Change take Place, happy to this Church and Nation, that blasted at once those dark Schemes that had been laid for our Destruction, by bringing Home to us the *Protestant Succession*, he had a true and warm Sense of that great Blessing, and adored the good Providence of God that had at last placed our Civil and Religious Liberties upon so strong and sure a Foundation; “and though neither  
 “ you, nor I, (was his saying to a Friend) are to look for any Amend-  
 “ ment of our Fortunes, yet we have now the Satisfaction, that  
 “ we shall enjoy our little Properties in Quiet and Security, and trans-  
 “ mit them safe to our Children.” Such was his easy and contented Mind, never aspiring after, or solicitous for a Change; yet he was soon considered, as he well deserved, being translated to the Bishoprick of *Ely*, in which Station he lived almost nine Years, the same steady Man, a constant Friend and Defender of the established Laws of his Country.

But it is high Time to answer the Expectation of the Reader, and shew more particularly what Sort of a Man our Bishop was, without detracting from his real Worth, or adding to it. This, I am sensible, requires a much abler Pen than mine; it is not easy to do Justice to so much Merit, and set so amiable a Character in the Light it deserves to be seen in. There was something so fine in his Composition, so much above the common Make, so much Spirit and Life in the whole Manner of him; something so pleasing and captivating in every Thing he said or did, that it calls for the most masterly Hand to draw such a Picture as shall not fall very much short of the Original.

He lived an useful, studious, exemplary Life, so constantly employed in the good Way of his Profession, that no Man had fewer idle Hours to answer for. He had a just Sense of the Duty of his Office, and lived up to the Dignity of it. He was constant in Preaching, which Duty he discharged for many Years three Times a Week: It may be truly said, he was the most celebrated Preacher of his Time: I need not say how usefully he employed his Talent, or with how much Eloquence; his Sermons fully speak it; which he set off with such a Sweetness of Voice, and such a graceful Delivery, that he charmed his Hearers into the warmest Attention, and left a lasting Impression on their Minds; and that which made his Sermons more useful, was the fine Vein of Casuistry that ran through most of them; wherein he displayed a peculiar Talent in making Things plain and easy, which seemed to many difficult, and gave Disturbance to weak and honest Minds: He informed the Judgment, and then set the Mind at Rest. To which may be added, what many of his Auditors have often said, that they seldom



feldom heard him preach, but they learnt something from him that they had never observed or heard before. He was a diligent Visiter of the Sick, and a skilful Healer of the Wounds of Conscience; for the Cure of which sad Malady, he was often applied to by many who were not properly under his Care; to whom he was a willing and a wise Instructor. And these good Offices he discharged in so affectionate and tender a Manner, that besides the inward Satisfaction he had of doing much Good, many of those who had applied to him, expressed the grateful Sense they had of this his Labour of Love, which he bestowed upon them, by kind Legacies bequeathed to him; some of which came to his Hands after he was a Bishop.

In this Station, he did not cease to be a Preacher; he was a constant one at St. *Asaph*, where the Choir was well suited to his Voice; not so at *Ely*, where the Church was much too large for it; but in his own Chapel at *Ely-house*, so frequent in the Discharge of that good Part of his Office, though in the cold Season of the Year, that he has sometimes preached four and twenty Sermons in the Space of six Months. He was a great Lover of Antiquities, especially of those of his own Country; but that did not cast a Rust upon his Parts, or spoil his Style; an Effect it often has upon those, whose Genius leads them early into that Kind of Study. He was a *useful* Antiquarian, and at the same Time a fine Preacher. The filling of the Churches in the Diocese of St. *Asaph*, where he was almost the General Patron, with virtuous and worthy Men, was what lay near his Heart: He often expressed the great Satisfaction he had in bestowing Preferments on worthy Clergymen, and was extremely pleased when upon Experience and Observation he found that the Care of their People was Matter of Conscience to them; "So may it always be, he used to say, and with  
 " Increase, for without that there was no Living, but he was sure, no  
 " Dying with Comfort." He paid little or no Regard to the importunate Solicitations of the great Men of that Diocese, if the Person recommended was not found upon due Enquiry, to be of an unblemished Life; and though he could not have the Satisfaction he wished, of filling his Churches with Men he thoroughly approved in other Respects, yet he took much Pains to fill them with Men of Virtue; and if ever he was moved beyond his usual Temper, it was when he found he had been deceived by Testimonials that had little or no Truth in them. He had a generous Heart; his Hands were always open to those in Want, especially to the poorer Clergy, to whom he often gave Money, or Books, besides the Remission of their Fees. He was a liberal Encourager of every charitable Design that came in his Way, never shewing any De-  
 fire



fire to be rich, except in good Works; and he was much pleased when he heard that any rich Man had left something to good Uses; saying sometimes upon that Occasion, "It were almost reasonable there should be a moderate Purgatory for such as live and die so wealthy, without doing any good to any Body but their Children, when there was so much Want and Misery in the World." He was much concerned to see so much Passion and Uncharitableness raised by Difference in Opinion in Matters of Religion; and thought that mere Mistakes, and such Differences as did not influence Practice, were to be born with. He looked upon the *Schism Act* as a cruel Imposition upon the natural Rights of Mankind, and as Persecution in the worst Shape it could almost appear in; "for if to deprive Parents of the Right of educating their Children in the Way they thought best, was not Persecution," he said, he knew not what was; and that the Way to judge of such Matters was, to bring the Case home to ourselves, and to suppose that others believe themselves to be as much in the Right as we do." He was modest and humble almost to a Fault, Qualities rarely to be found in a Breast so replete with Knowledge as his was; and as he fled from his just Praises, and was always uneasy under them, so was he backward to censure others. His Temper was sweet and even, calm and meek, so that hardly any thing could discompose him; no Passion, no Resentment, no partial Mixtures could find a Place in his Breast. To this happy Temper of Mind was joined a good Degree of cool and sedate Courage, which he did not fail to shew whenever a proper Occasion called for it. And to crown all his other good Qualities, so much Innocence of Life, Integrity of Heart, and Sanctity of Manners, hardly ever met in any one Man in a fuller Measure than they did in him. In a word, this good Bishop excelled in every Virtue that constitutes a wise Man, and in every Grace that distinguishes a Christian.

After a Course of many Years so virtuously and so usefully employed, he died in 1723, and was buried in the Cathedral Church of *Ely*, where a neat Monument has been erected to his Memory, with the following Inscription.

H. S. E.

Gulielmus Fleetwood

*Hujus Ecclesiæ, olim Asaphensis, Episcopus,*

*Pridie Non. August. A. D. MDCCLXXIII<sup>o</sup>,*

*Suæ Ætatis LXVII<sup>m</sup>*

*Nondum pervectus obiit, gravi jam senectute innumeris*

*Laborum studiis approperata;*



# P R E F A C E.

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*Quorum sanè recensionem neque ulla satis patet Tabula;  
Nec Morum sanctimoniam, candorem Ingenii, rerumque  
Divinarum et Humanarum scientiam, Hic commemorare  
Opus erat; neque vero ineluctabilem (suavissimæ tamen)  
Eloquentiæ vim, Religioni Patriæque, Sacramento  
Semper fido, militantis; nec Robur illud Pectoris ultrò  
Sævientibus formidolosæ Potentiæ Minis atque Flammis  
Oppositum, pro Domo nunc Regiâ, Hoc est, pro Legibus  
Ipsaque Populi salute, et civili et sempiterna;  
Ista enim ad omnem memoriam Ipse quam plurimis  
Consignavit, expressitque Monumentis suis;  
Qualia non ponimus superstites.  
Sed hoc testari Conjux dilectissima suam Unicque Filii  
Venerationem voluit, et Desideria atq; luctus insanabiles solari.*

But I must not conclude this Account of the Bishop's Life, without saying something of his Writings, which are here now first brought together. I have already observed what is the Spirit of those Pieces that relate at all to Politicks and Government, which abundantly prove that he was a true *Englishman*, and sincerely well affected to the established Church. The other Pieces shew how willingly he laid hold of all Occasions to engage Men to acquit themselves worthily of all Sorts of Duties in private Life, religious and moral.

There is no need of speaking to every particular Tract; the Occasion of each of them, the Reader will presently discover from the Tract itself. It is sufficient here to say, that they came from the same masterly Pen, and as such carry their own Recommendation along with them. He that reads over any one of these Tracts with due Attention to the Style and Manner of Writing, will himself easily discover the same Hand in every one of them; some Peculiarities, (as the Bishop himself said to a Friend, after the Publication of his Vindication of the 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter to the *Romans*, which he had not sufficiently disguised) making the Author, tho' he had industriously concealed his Name, guessed at by most, and easily known to many. They who do not know the History of those Times, may wonder perhaps to see a Sermon on a Fast-day *against those that delight in War*, published without his Name, when he was Bishop of *St. Asaph*; but their Wonder will cease, when they are told that this Sermon was to have been preached before the *House of Lords*, to which Office he had been appointed by that House; but that the new Ministry, who shortly after did him the Honour to burn his *Immortal Preface*, fearing he had drawn his Pen against their



*Inglorious Peace*, deprived him of the Opportunity of Preaching it, by adjourning the House designedly beyond *that Day*. But the Bishop would not be altogether disappointed: He published what he was not suffered to preach, under the Name of a *Divine of the Church of England*, but was soon known by every Reader to be the Author of it. The World has it now, as it was first delivered, with those Passages inserted, which the Printer, who then knew not the Author, had omitted, from a just Dread of feeling some of that severe Treatment, which those *Arbitrary Ministers* dealt out in full Measure to all, who had the Courage to expose their Conduct.

It may be proper to take Notice, in relation to his *Essay upon Miracles*, that it has been often affirmed, and passes with some for a certain Truth, that the Bishop, in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. *Hoadley*, (the present Bishop of *Winchester*) who had written a short Answer to that Essay, had given up his Scheme. But this, the Reader may be assured, is a Report altogether false. Nor is the Bishop's not replying any just Ground for such a Surmise: For it was almost a Principle with him never to enter into Controversy, to which he had an extreme Aversion; the Acrimony with which Disputes were too often carried on, being not at all agreeable to the Calmness and Meekness of his Temper, for which Reason he would not be drawn to defend what he had written. "I write my own Sense as well as I can", was his saying upon such Occasions, "If it be right, it will support itself; if it be not, it is fit it should sink." I could not omit this Opportunity of doing this Piece of Justice to the Bishop's Memory.



# The CONTENTS of this Collection of Bishop FLEETWOOD's Writings.

N. B. *Those Pieces which were published without his Name, are distinctly set down so in this List.*

1689.	A Sermon preached before the University of <i>Cambridge</i> , in <i>King's College</i> Chapel, on the 25th of <i>March</i> 1689, being the Anniversary for Commemoration of King <i>Henry VI</i> , the Founder.	Page 1
1691.	A Sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, <i>Nov.</i> 5. 1691.	12
1691.	A Sermon preached at <i>Christ-Church</i> , before the Governors of that Hospital, on <i>St. Stephen's Day</i> , 1691.	23
1692.	A Sermon preached before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen at <i>St. Mary le Bow</i> , <i>April</i> 11. 1692.	38
1692.	A Sermon preached at <i>Guildhall Chapel</i> , <i>Dec.</i> 11. 1692.	49
1693.	A Sermon preached before the Queen at <i>Whitehall</i> , <i>Feb.</i> 12. 1692-3.	59
1694.	A Sermon against Clipping. Preached before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, at <i>Guildhall Chapel</i> , <i>Dec.</i> 16. 1694.	69
1696.	A Sermon of the Education of Children. Preached before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen at <i>Guildhall Chapel</i> , <i>Nov.</i> 1. 1696.	79
1698.	A Sermon preached at <i>St. Paul's Cathedral</i> , before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, <i>Jan.</i> 30. 1698-99.	93
1700.	A Sermon preached before the King at <i>Whitehall</i> , <i>Nov.</i> 5. 1700.	104
1701.	A Sermon preached before the Gentlemen educated at <i>Eton College</i> , <i>Dec.</i> 6. 1701.	114
1701.	An Essay upon Miracles.	125
-1704.	The Reasonable Communicant; or, an Explanation of the Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in all its Parts, from the Communion Service. <i>Without his Name.</i>	173
1704.	A Sermon preached on <i>Sept.</i> 7. 1704. being the Day for the Thanksgiving.	197
1705.	The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants; considered in Sixteen practical Discourses; with three Sermons upon the Case of Self-Murder.	207
1705.	A Fast Sermon, preached before the Queen at <i>St. James's</i> , <i>April</i> 4. 1705.	362
1705.	A Sermon preached before the Queen at <i>Windſor</i> , <i>June</i> 17. 1705.	371
-1707.	<i>Chronicon Pretioſum</i> ; or, an Account of <i>Engliſh</i> Money, the Price of Corn, and other Commodities, for the laſt 600 Years. In a Letter to a Student in the University of <i>Oxford</i> . <i>Without his Name.</i>	379
1708.	A Thanksgiving Sermon preached before the Queen at <i>St. Paul's</i> , <i>Auguſt</i> 19. 1708.	435
1709.	A Sermon preached before the Queen at <i>St. James's</i> , <i>April</i> 17. 1709.	444
1710.	A Sermon preached before the Lords, <i>Jan.</i> 30. 1709-10.	453
		1710.



## The Contents of this Collection, &c.

- 1710. The B<sup>p</sup> of St. *Asaph*'s Charge to the Clergy of that Diocese in 1710. Page 463
- 1710. The 13th Chapter to the *Romans* vindicated from the abusive Senses put upon it. *Without his Name.* 484
- 1711. A Sermon preached before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Feb. 16. 1710-11. 495
- 1711. A Sermon on the Fast-Day, Jan. 16. 1711-12. against such as delight in War. *Without his Name.* 506
- 1712. The Judgment of the Church of *England* in the Case of Lay-Baptism and of Dissenters Baptism. In two Parts. *Without his Name.* 515
- 1712. Four Sermons. I. On the Death of Queen *Mary*, 1694. II. On the Death of the Duke of *Gloucester*, 1700. III. On the Death of King *William*, 1701. IV. On the Queen's Accession to the Throne, preached in 1703. Which Four Sermons were published together in 1712: With a Preface. 557
- 1713. The Life and Miracles of St. *Wenefrede*, together with her Litanies. With some Historical Observations made thereon. *Without his Name.* 593
- 1713. A Funeral Sermon on the Death of Mr. *Noble*, who was executed at *Kingston*, for the Murther of a Gentleman with whose Wife he had criminal Conversation. *Without his Name.* 658
- 1715. The Counsellor's Plea for the Divorce of Sir G. D. and Mrs. F. *Without his Name.* 667
- 1716. A Thanksgiving Sermon preached at *Ely-House* Chapel, June 7. 1716. 681
- 1716. A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of *Ely* at *Cambridge*, Aug. 7. 1716. 693
- 1717. Papists not excluded from the Throne upon the Account of Religion. Being a Vindication of the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of *Bangor* (Dr. *Hoadley*'s) Prefervative, &c. in that Particular. *Without his Name.* 705
- 1717. A Sermon preached before the King in the Chapel Royal at St. *James's* on March. 2. the first Sunday in Lent, 1717. 710
- 1717. A Letter from Mr. *J. Burdett* ( who was executed at *Tyburn* for the Murder of Capt. *Falkner* ) to some Attorneys Clerks of his Acquaintance, written 6 Days before his Execution. *Without his Name.* 718
- 1717. A Letter to an Inhabitant of the Parish of St. *Andrews Holborn*, about new Ceremonies in the Church. *Without his Name.* 722
- 1718. The Justice of paying Debts. A Sermon preached in the City. 728
- 1720. A Defence of Praying before Sermon, as directed by the LVth Canon. *Without his Name.* 737
- 1721. A Sermon upon Swearing. *Without his Name.* 761
- 1722. A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of *Ely* in Aug. 1722. 770



# LIST

## O F

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# S E R M O N

Preached before the University of *Cambridge*, in  
*King's College Chapel*, on the 25th of *March*,  
1689. being the Anniversary for Commemora-  
tion of King *Henry VI.* the Founder.

2 COR. IX. 12.

*For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the  
saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.*

**A**FTER St. Paul had been exhorting the *Corinthians* to a liberal and speedy Contribution to the poor Saints at *Jerusalem*, from abundance of Topicks general and particular; such as the Excellence of the Nature of the Work itself, the Example of the *Macedonians*, and the Expectation that Church had; the Reasonableness of this, that as they had abounded in every thing, so they should also abound in this Grace; from the Forwardness of others, from the Example of Christ, who for their Sakes became Poor, that they through his Poverty might be made Rich, from the Expediency and Profitableness of perfecting a good Work they had already begun, and from their own Forwardness which had made it in a manner superfluous for him to write to them, which take up the eighth and ninth Chapters of this Epistle, he enforces it by this at last, that this their Charity would *cause thanksgivings to God*, ver. 11. and in the Text with an Addition — *for the administration of, &c.*

By the *administration of this service* we must understand, the Distribution of Alms, the Liberality of communicating, the exercising Acts of Charity; Alms being a Part of the spiritual Service under the Gospel, and call'd in ritual and pontific Terms, *an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God*, Phil. iv. 18. and so in Heb. xiii. 16. *To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased*; and its Commendation here is, that it not only supplies the want of the Saints, but it is an Obligation and Incitement to theirs and others Gratitude to God; it occasions Prayers and Thanksgivings, and the Name of God is thereby glorified. As therefore the Text will not justly allow, so I think the Occasion of this assembling will require no more at my Hands, than the treating of these two Heads in the first place, and of applying them to our present Purpose in the second.

To supply the Necessities of such as are in want, is a Work of such acknowledged Excellence in its own Nature, carries such Sweetness and Complacence with it in its Practice; is so agreeable to all Mankind, and of such pleasing Odour before God, that it were a kind of Injury to any here, to suppose them so entirely lost to all the Principles of good Nature, of improv'd Reason, and reveal'd Religion, as to think they wanted Conviction, or indeed Persuasion in this Case. It is to be just to the Text, that I insist a little on these Heads.

*First* then, It is a Work of great Excellence in its own Nature, it is perfecting human Nature, and advancing it as far as it can go; in nothing do we more resemble and



draw near the Godhead than in that Largeness of Heart, and generous Disposition of Soul, from whence the Works of Charity proceed: and what is express'd in St. *Luke* by — *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful*; is in St. *Matthew* — *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*. 'Tis honouring our Maker. 'Tis, in a manner, and by his Permission, mending the Works of God, and bettering the Creation: For he, in his all-wise Disposal of Affairs, has ordered Matters so, that there should seem to be a great many Defects in Nature, a great deal of Partiality in the Distribution of the Things of this World, and Inequality in the Gifts of Fortune; and hath submitted all the World to the Dominion of what we call Chance and Accidents. And this not through any Impotence of Power, Defect of Foresight, or Good-will to Man; but most especially for the Exercise of the Wisdom and the Virtue of his Creatures. And therefore he that best repairs these Breaches, supplies these Defects, makes up these Inequalities, and best provides against these evil and unhappy Accidents; improves the human Nature most, and best deserves of it, does the most excellent and beneficial Work, acts the most reasonably and most conformably to the divine Will, he best accomplishes the Works of God and the Designs of Providence. It is hard to conceive an Attempt more Noble, or a Work more Excellent than what the Heathens call'd the conquering Fortune, and giving to Man a new Fate; but we must say, than the rescuing human Nature from that Contempt and Misery into which our Sins first threw it, and under which they keep it still in Bondage; which is done (and never better done than) by the Exercise of Charity. 'Twas Sin that first debased our Kind, and first subjected it to Pains and Sickneses, Infirmities and Wants, and all the Sorrows and Distresses under which we see and feel it labours, and to whatever makes us the Objects of one another's Pity and Compassion. And God by his usual Methods (full of astonishing Love and Kindness) hath dealt so graciously both for and with us, that we may (like himself) work good from evil; and by a rare Reverse of Providence, hath both enjoined and enabled us, to make these sad Effects of Sin, Occasions of new Righteousness, and of destroying Sin itself; and in our own, and one another's Miseries, hath given us, as it were, so many Opportunities of exercising greater Graces, of practising more Virtues, of raising the Soul to a nobler Pitch, and aspiring to a better Immortality, than otherwise, for any thing we know, we could or should have had. He therefore that is practising Beneficence, feeding the Hungry, cloathing the Naked, visiting the Sick and in Prison, relieving the Distressed, and doing Good, is at the same time rising as it were from *Adam's* Fall, vindicating human Nature, asserting his Original, exalting and ennobling of his Soul, and in a manner triumphing already over Sin, and Death, and Hell.

Yet after all, this Work of Love is not more excellent in its Nature, than (to our Comfort) it is, *Secondly*, Both sweet and pleasant in its Practice: And in good truth, 'tis very happy for us that it is so, considering 'tis so frequently, so earnestly, so inexcusably enjoin'd and made our constant Duty. Our Souls are so united to our Bodies, so closely tack'd and fastned to their Matter, and clogg'd with their Corruption, that tho' they can make shift to discern the Reasonableness and Necessity of performing their Duty, yet they are difficultly mov'd to Practice, unless some sensible Impression of Delight, accompanying the Duty, be made appear, and they be not only fed with future Hopes and Expectations. Proportionable therefore to this Necessity and strict Injunction of this Duty, hath God in his Goodness made the Pleasure and Delight that constantly attends it. There is that Sweetness and Complacency in doing good to those that want, that even the bare Desires and Wishes of it, when it is beyond our Power to do it, give us a good Degree of Peace and Quiet and Content within; and we can satisfy our Scruples with the Sincerity of our Designs and Purposes: but if we bring those Purposes to good Effect, there is then such a Spring of Joy and Contentation rising in the



the Soul, the Spirits overflow so pleasingly, and the Heart swells with such sweet Gaity and Pride, that it is hard to find a Name for the delightful Passion, and we can sooner feel than can express what 'tis we mean. And though these Ecstasies abate in time, and languish by degrees, yet the Delights of doing good pursue a Man as long as the Remembrance of it lasts. It is impossible to call to mind a Man's good Deeds, or view the Objects of his Charity, without abundance of Content and solid Satisfaction. I make no doubt, but the devout and humble Soul returns God frequent Thanks for his exciting and assisting Grace; but I doubt very much, whether 'tis possible in human Nature not to reflect Honour and Pleasure on one's self withal; they do so naturally flow, so unavoidably result from the Remembrance of those Acts of Charity and kind Beneficence. And *Seneca* had never more Reason, than when describing this Virtue, he said it was, *Actio benevola tribuens gaudium, capiēsq̃ue tribuendo.*

*Thirdly*, 'Tis agreeable to all Mankind——We are frequently forced, when we would recommend a Virtue to our Audience, to tell them, 'tis approv'd and practis'd by all the *Wise*, and *Good*, and *Sober* Persons of the World; which tho' it is not so, yet it *may* look like begging of the question, because we are already prepossess'd in favour of that Virtue, and consequently may be thought to call and judge those Persons Wise, and Good, and Sober, barely from the Practice of it. But when a Man can safely say that all the World approves a thing, that High and Low, Rich and Poor, Young and Old, Good and Bad agree to it, and have been always of the Opinion; when they who cannot practise it, still wish they could; and they who do not, are ashamed, and make what Shew they can, as if they did; when no Man's Confidence or Wit hath ever carried him so far, as to dispute its Excellence, or praise its Opposite, a Man must be forsaken quite of Sense, and Reason, and good Manners; he must do strange Violence to all the Powers of his Soul, whom the Reverence that is due to the so general Judgment of the World, cannot impress upon, or move to the Belief and Practice of this noble Duty upon all Occasions.

*Fourthly*, 'Tis acceptable in the Sight of God; it must needs be so, he would not otherwise have charged it on us with such Earnestness, commanded it so positively, and call'd upon us for Performance so incessantly, and threatned its Neglect so terribly, throughout the Scriptures. It must needs be acceptable, because we are thereby kind to him himself, in relieving his Friends; for such is his Goodness, that he hath made the Cause of those that want, his own, and reckons up the Good we do to them, done to himself, and will accordingly reward it. It must needs be acceptable, because we thereby exercise an Act of Faith and Confidence in his Truth and Goodness, we give him something sure and in Possession, for the Reversion of Rewards we know at present little of; we give because he bids, and trust because he says that he is faithful. And the Scriptures place a great deal of the Merit of *Abraham's* Faith, in obeying when he was called to leave his Country and his Father's House, and going out altho' *he knew not whither he went*; that is, in ready Confidence and in implicit Faith: It must needs be acceptable, because we thereby honour him in obeying his Commands, are just in owning him the Lord and true Proprietor of all we have, and paying this Acknowledgment, and by shewing ourselves grateful, and in some measure worthy of his Mercies. And to conclude, in a great many other Ways, not needful to recount at present.

But if the Works of Charity are thus excellent and sweet, thus acceptable both to God and Man, when exercis'd on those that *only want*; they are yet more excellent and sweet, and more agreeable, when exercis'd on those that want, and that *deserve* them at the same time. It is a great Improvement of the Argument, when the Administration of this Service supplieth the Want of the *Saints*. Not but that to stand in need of Charity, is, strictly speaking, to deserve it, and is the first and most immediate Cause and Motive both of Giving and Receiving: so that he that asks and receives upon



upon presumption of his Want, and yet wants not, is at the best but a Deceiver and a Cheat; and he that gives without Presumption of that Want, may be munificent or liberal, good-natured, vain, or whatever else he pleases, but not charitable. But when both Want and Merit meet, the Practice of this Grace is much more satisfactory to one's self, and more agreeable to God and Man. It is a complicated Act of Goodness then, it is approving and rewarding Virtue, encouraging Religion, Industry and Honesty, and whatever else may be the Merits of the Receiver, as well as pitying and relieving his Distress. Let us try (said one of old with admirable Reason) how to make our Benefits most lasting and most serviceable, and such as may never turn to Evil, and that will be by carefully and wisely chusing where to place them most deservedly; I will never give Money to a Man *qui adulteræ numerabit*, I won't be so far accessory to his lewd Acts or Purposes; I will if I can reclaim him; but if not, I don't intend to encourage or promote his Wickedness; with a great deal more to good purpose, and agreeable to the Voice of right Reason, which adviseth us to associate Prudence with Beneficence, and whilst we are succouring human Nature, to discountenance Vice and Immorality withal, to encourage Virtue and Religion, and serve the Interests of the Commonwealth. And to tie this Duty closer, it is now become an Obligation of Reveal'd as well as Natural Religion, and we must, *as we have opportunity, do good to all men, but especially to those that are of the household of faith*. And amongst other Duties summ'd up in Rom. xii. one is, *distributing to the necessities of the saints*; and St. Paul makes a Journey on purpose to *Jerusalem, to minister to the saints*, and raises the Character of the *Macedonians*, from their *making contributions to*, and that of the *house of Stephanas*, from *ad-dicting themselves to the ministry of the saints*. And tho' in all those Places, by the Saints we are to understand *Believers, Christians* in general, false as well as true; yet we must understand withal, that they were honour'd with that Name, from the *Sanctity* of their Profession, their holy Doctrine, and their presumed holy Practice, as well as in Contradistinction to the unbelieving *Jews*, and the profane unhallowed *Gentiles*. So that as a Man must take all due Care in the Choice of fit and proper Objects of his Charity, and see that they be good and truly Saints if possible; yet he must not abstain from doing good, purely upon the account of his Uncertainty, whether his Works will be bestowed deservedly or no. A Man must not frequently make the Suspense of his Mind, a ground for with-holding his Hand: The Pretence will always last, and without great Care will prove a Snare to Virtue; it will put him upon little Tricks and disingenuous Shifts of pleading causelessly against Mens Merits; it will make him argue nicely and ill-naturedly, and subtilly distinguish the Poor out of Relief, and himself out of Charity, and engage him by degrees into Hardness of Heart, and an inhuman Temper. Let every one but do his best, and guide himself by the most probable Appearances and outward Shews, (of which he only can be Judge) and leave the Issue and Event to God—To God, who has made it a Duty to be charitable, but has not withal given us a Spirit of Discernment, to sever Hypocrites from the sincere and honest Christians; and therefore cannot reasonably be thought to require this great Exactness at our Hands; and is much too just and kind, not to reward our good Intentions for the sake of another's undiscoverable Malignity. It is therefore good and necessary, it shews our Hope and Confidence, our Faith and our Obedience, that we sow our Seed at peradventure; but it is better that it fall on good Ground; it is good that we intend it well, but it is better those Intentions find their good Effects. It is a great Commendation of Charity, that it supplies the Necessities of such as *want*; but it is a greater yet, when it supplies the Necessities of *Saints*, and truly good Christians.

But, Secondly, *It is abundant also by many thanksgivings towards God. Whilst by the experiment of this administration (as St. Paul says in the following Verse) they glorify God.—First, for their profess'd Subjection to the Gospel of Christ. Secondly, for their*  
liberal



liberal Distribution to them and to all Men. And, *Thirdly*, by their Prayers for you.

If there wanted Arguments to advance the Praise and Honour of this most excellent and useful Grace of Charity, one might, without being too minute, and forcing things unreasonably, deduce a very certain and well-grounded one from hence, that the Works of Charity are here made the Marks of our *professed Subjection to the Gospel of Christ*: That though there are other Ways of appearing Christians, such as being baptized into the Church's Faith, frequenting its Assemblies, partaking of its Sacraments, and submitting to its Discipline; yet that the clearest Tokens, the certainest Indications, the openest and most avowed Profession of our Christianity, is the Practice of good Works, in pursuance of its holy Doctrine and Commands.

But since there is no great need of this, I have only to observe at present, *First*, that their Charity administred Occasion of glorifying God, and honouring the Christian Religion; *Secondly*, that they who were, and were to be, relieved, were grateful to God by returning him Thanks for the Liberality of their Benefactors; and *Thirdly*, grateful to their Benefactors by praying to God for them.

*First*, It occasioned the glorifying God and honouring Christianity. For as it is in human Intercourses, where when one Man by Counsel or Persuasion of another performs some brave and generous Action, Part of the Praise and Glory, where it is known, will both deservedly and unavoidably result upon the Encourager and Setter on; so is it in the Case of Charity betwixt God and Men. It must needs be, that with considering People, the Merit and the Glory of those Benefits must fall especially on God, who first inspir'd those Principles into the Souls of Men, from whence those gracious Acts proceeded.

But farther, their Works of Charity were Occasions of honouring Christianity, of preferring that particular Oeconomy to both the *Gentile* and the *Jewish* Dispensation. Let Men contend never so long, so warmly and so wisely about the Preference of the several Theologies, about the Excellency of their Doctrines, and the Properness of their Natures, to exalt the Understandings, to refine the Powers and Faculties of the Mind, and raise the Souls of Men to a nobler Pitch, and closer Union with the Godhead: Yet after all, that Doctrine that is fitted best for the general Welfare of Mankind, and best consults its publick Benefit and Interest in this World (not excluding that of another) will certainly prevail and carry it above the rest, when once it is truly scan'd and understood. So that had the Christian *Dogmata* been as suitable to the Wisdom of the World, and as agreeable to its Way of reasoning, as its practic Precepts were to the Convenience and Benefit of human Life, it had not stood in need of Miracles, it had obtain'd that by its own Reasonableness and natural Force, which it did by supernatural and divine Assistance; it was so calculated for the general Good, consulted so the Weal and Comfort of the World. Nay, it disposed the Minds of Men so sweetly to the Practice of Humanity, Compassion, Charity, Beneficence, and, in a word, to all good Nature, that even where Miracles were wanting, both obstinate and sullen *Jews*, and vicious hardned *Gentiles*, were by them often charmed into Conversion, and always into Admiration of those generous Doctrines: and even in spite of all the indigestible Difficulties of the Christian *Creed*, they could not chuse but love the Christian *Prædication*. So that doing good and multiplying Acts of Charity, was the most natural and ready Way of heaping Honours on their Institution, of conciliating the Esteem and Favour of the World, of winning Proselytes, and gaining upon those that were without, and of securing and confirming those that were already in.

*Secondly*, Those that were relieved were grateful to God, by returning him Thanks for the Liberality of their Benefactors. *They glorify God*, says St. Paul, *for your liberal distributions to them and to all men.*

However it is that God impresses on the Minds of Men, and moves them to good Works of Charity, whether by stirring and impregnating those Seeds of natural Pity



he hath sown in all our Hearts, or moving us by Hopes or Fears, by Promises or Threats, Rewards or Punishments, or by some special Act of, quickning and exciting Grace, some sudden sweet Illapses from above, or some illuminating Vision and divine Monition; or whether Men are moved themselves, by the Vanity of their own Hearts, by the Decency and Comeliness of those Works, by the Ambition of Fame, and the Reputation of being called Benefactors, by the Delights of Praise whilst living, and the Desires of Glory when they are dead, or from what other Motive certain or unknown, those who receive the Benefits are most undoubtedly obliged to make their due Acknowledgments to God by their Returns of Praise and Thanksgiving. For let the Cause and Motives, and the Instruments be what they will, yet the kind Fruits and good Effects will certainly require, and certainly deserve it at their Hands. The Goods are equally the Gifts of God, and the Dispensers of them equally his Stewards (with respect to the Receivers) as if they had had immediate Charge there to bestow them. And God must not lose his Praise, though the Givers do; though they too should be Losers only in the Day of Recompence. We must not do as some Men do, who see no farther than the Hand that reaches, and only mind the next immediate Cause that ministers to their Relief; like some (but few) absurd Idolaters of old, that deified the visible and flowing Streams, but never thought upon the hidden Springs from whence they came; they entertain with Joy and Thankfulness to Men, the Pleasures and the Benefits that they receive, but never think of looking up to God, the Fountain and Original of all their Happiness. But it was not so with those of whom *St. Paul* treats; they made the kind Benevolence of their Benefactors an Occasion of praising God, and honouring his most holy Name, and by *seeing and by feeling mens good works, they learnt* (as all of us should do) *to glorify their Father in heaven.*

*Thirdly* and lastly, They were grateful to their Benefactors by praying to God for them. It cannot fairly be denied, but that there is a strong Propension in us all, to Self-sufficiency and Independence one upon another. No Man can say, but he had rather want no Help, than be obliged to others for it; but since this cannot be, the next thing we have to do, is to contrive how to be even and on the square again with our Obligers; and the nearer we come to it, the freer we think ourselves, and certainly are more contented and at ease: But since the State of Affairs in this Life will not admit of equal Gratitude in Kind, or indeed in any tolerable Proportion, God in his Goodness hath prepared for the Poor the Comfort and Relief of Prayer, and hath annexed such Promises to the due Performance of that Work, as may quickly equal the most considerable Advantages they can receive from any of their Benefactors; and hath made it their religious Duty, as well as their natural Desire, to pay their Debts and Obligations, and hath commanded them to solicit him, by earnest Prayers and by incessant Cries, to shower down Favours on their Benefactors Heads; and as there is an unaccountable Venom in their bitter Cries and Curses, so have their Prayers a marvellously penetrating Power and Force. And of this the World hath been in every Age so well assured, that there have not wanted Men of all Conditions and Degrees, Sons of Peace and conquering Heroes, high and mighty Princes, Clergy, Laity, Learned and Ignorant, that have exchanged their Gold and Silver, Lands, Jewels, rich Donations, ample Settlements, stately Structures, Colleges and Hospitals, for the bare Purchase of these Prayers, and thought it no ill Bargain: That have looked upon their following Victories and Triumphs, the prosperous and successful Issues of their Undertakings, as so many Returns and Answers of these Prayers, so many Blessings forced from Heaven, by the sweet Violence of their importunate Addresses to the Throne of Grace. So that praying for Benefactors hath not been more esteemed a Duty on the Receiver's Side, than it hath proved a Motive and Encouragement to giving. And it may be it is better to stop here, than proceed to tell the Extravagancies to which the excessive Confidence that Men reposed in these kind of Prayers and Services, transported many a good, but indiscreetly zealous Soul. And since there



there is now no Danger from the Examples, let us rather chuse to cover, than excuse or condemn, the Faults (shall I say) or rather the Mistakes of our Forefathers.

And now, having done what Right I could be well allowed to do the Text, I am come, in the second place, to apply what I can to our present Purpose.

And *First*, If St. Paul so earnestly exhorts to, and commends a Piece of private, casual, temporary, transient Charity; how much is due, what might be said of such a publick, so deliberately designed, and such a lasting one (an everlasting one I hope) as I stand here the grateful Subject of? *A private man may cast his bread upon the waters in hopes to find it after many days, and give a portion to seven and also to eight, because he knoweth not what evil shall be upon the earth.* And if notwithstanding this Design, and these self-interested Principles, the Work is excellent and acceptable both to God and Man; it must needs be infinitely more so, when a *Prince* becomes the Donor, under whose Consideration, none of those Hopes or Fears can reasonably be thought to fall. And if the relieving private and some few Persons, want not its Praise and Glory, they must both of them rise as the Merit does, where the Publick is obliged, and all may put in equal Claim and Title to the Benefaction, that will be content with his Way of Education. The Story is well known to Us, be sure; but he that would record the virtuous Qualities and fair Endowments of our glorious Founder, to those that are without, or to Posterity, could not by any means forget that most remarkable and noble Instance of his large and comprehensive Soul, in generously rejecting one of our first Governors, for his too partial Fondness to his native Country, and endeavouring to appropriate all the Royal Bounty to it only; considering with himself, that though a private Man might do the same with Reason enough and Justice too, yet that a *Prince* should both in this and every thing besides, approve himself a *Father of the Publick*.

*Secondly*, A formed, premeditated and deliberate Work of Charity has certainly the Advantage of a casual, accidental one; this may be wrested only by the Importunity of some that want, Compliance with the Custom of the Place, forced by the Example of the Company, and Shame of being singular, or exprest from Men by the lamentable Moans and Presence of some piteous Object: and Men are often seen, upon Removal of those Objects, and the going down of those mechanick Springs of Tenderness, to harden and return again to their ill-natured Tempers, and frequently repent them of the Good they did, wishing themselves again Possessors of their Riches. But he that acts deliberately, that forms his Designs before-hand, without any present artificial Motives, and certainly intends them for a lasting Benefit to all Posterity, must be presumed in Reason and in Justice to build upon the best and surest Grounds, to proceed upon the noblest and most perfect Principles. It cannot indeed be said, that this Foundation was the Design of *many Years before*, for the King himself was then but twenty-three at the most, an Age most commonly of little thinking with Great Men, or at best, of little else, than how to pass away that Spring of Life in Gaiety and Pleasure. But yet it was his earliest Undertaking and Design, and had for some considerable time been the whole Employment of his Thoughts, and his Heart was so intent upon the Matter, that he had little Rest, till he had brought it to a hopeful Prospect, and to some Degrees of its Perfection. It was no sudden accidental thing that moved him; it was not the Effect of his relenting Thoughts, after the shedding some innocent Blood, by the Rage of his own Hands, or by the hasty Execution of some furious Order; for he was meek and merciful, sparing of Blood, and tender to his Ruin: of such a gentle and forgiving Disposition, that when a rude and impious Soldier struck him knowingly in Prison, he afterwards upon the Throne rebuked him only with a Piece of Scripture, told him, *he should not strike the Lord's anointed.* Nor was it an Effect of his Repentance upon the cooling of his youthful Blood, nor of the Injunction of his Confessor, for some Extravagancies common to that Age. For what was said of virtuous *Gratian*



*tian*, may be said of him with equal Truth, not *Vesta's Altar*, *Pontifex his Bed*, nor *Flamen's Pillow* was more pure and holy than his Chamber. No honourable Wife, no noble Virgin, private Maid, or consecrated Spouse of Christ, called at his Hands for Satisfaction to their injured Honour. He was of such white Innocence, and such unfulled Sanctity in that behalf, that he could not bear those Liberties and Freedoms, that since make up the very Innocence and Modesty of Courts.

This Virtue was in truth so much his own, and so peculiarly engrossed up by him, that he seems to have carried her to Heaven along with him; and not to have left succeeding Kings the very Virtue of Hypocrisy, no not so much as the Grace to dissemble any kind of liking to that Purity. Nor was it an Atonement for some loud Oppression, Violence, Injustice, or some Sacrilege. *It is* (said one of old) *the last Defence of wicked Kings, to take away from Some to give to Others, and deprecate the Envy and the Odium of their present Rapines by some large Works of Bounty to Posterity.* But it was not so with him; for though his Reign were long and troublesome, and its Years might have been named and numbred from some remarkable Calamity befalling his Person or his Government, his Affairs perpetually embroiled by the prevailing Faction of his powerful Rival and Competitor for Sovereignty, and by the Passions of his own imperious and intriguing Queen, by the rude Works of War abroad, and by the Miseries of a worse at home, and consequently a great deal of Injustice must be done, yet no Man ever had the Hardiness to charge the King with any Evil; and that not for good Manners or Respect, but for the Truth and Justice sake. And it is so little likely he would cement our Buildings with the Blood or Tears of the Oppressed, that when he was in want of Money to expedite his Intentions, and was shown the way, by seizing to that Use the Estates of some that had forfeited them by Treason, he generously rejected their Advice, and could not bear the Thoughts, that any one in After Times should curse our Walls, and call with Bitterness and Anguish of their Souls for their Forefather's Patrimony.

It is not without Design (I own) that I have chosen to recommend our Founder and Foundation from these Topicks. For they who are conversant in the Histories both of our own and other Nations, (and I am sensible where I am) know very well, that Blood, and Lust, and Violence, have laid the Bottoms of more Abbies, Monasteries, Nunneries, more Chantries, Priors, more Hospitals and other Charitable Houses, than any other Three much better Principles. And though the good Effects may have atoned for their bad Causes, the goodly Children answered for the ungracious Parents; yet no one (sure) can be so partial to the Fruits, as not to wish they had sprung from a more creditable Stock. And I cannot but think we have some Advantage in having so merciful, so chaste and righteous a King our Founder, and moved by no other Principles than those of Honouring God, and Benefiting Mankind.

*Thirdly*, The Excellence and Merit of the Bounty we are Sharers of, rise yet much higher than that commended by St. *Paul*, by its Advantage of Duration and Continuance. That was a temporary transient Act, but This has all the Eternity that human Things admit of. That called for new Supplies within a while, This only wants that Men would have the Fear of God before their Eyes, and would withhold their Hands from Sacrilege and Robbery. Farther, That but supplied the bare Necessities, This both the Ease and the Conveniences of Life. That made Life tolerable, This might make it eligible; it were not for the Honour of these Kind of Works to say they went much farther: to say they furnished us with a luxurious Table, an overflowing Bowl, or ministered to our Excess in any kind. It is enough that they indulge to somewhat more than is required by parsimonious uncorrupted Nature, by sober well considering Reason, and by the Austerities of Christian Discipline.

The last and greatest Advantage that arises to us from this Sort of Bounty, is, that it supplies the Necessities of the Mind and Soul, it gives us Opportunities of improving the



the Powers and Faculties of the One, and consulting the true and everlasting Interest of the Other. We are here at perfect Ease and Liberty, free from all other Cares and Troubles than what we seek, or draw upon, or plunge into ourselves: entirely vacant to the Pursuits of Wisdom, and the Practice of Religion: have all the Helps, and all the Encouragements that we can want or wish for. Here we consult with dead Authorities, and living ones; may understand the Rules of Wisdom by the Examples, and learn the Precepts from the apparent Practice of every Grace and Virtue. Here we have Opportunities of frequent Sacraments, and more than daily Prayers; a kind of Force and most agreeable Necessity of being good, or of appearing so, or being singular in Evil, of Proof against the Injunctions of our Governors, the Force of Custom, and the Influence of good Examples, and consequently sin without Excuse. In a word, if we would measure our Felicities by the Judgment and Opinion of the World without, by our own Longings and Desires after this State of Life before we have attained it, or by the Torments and Vexations that attend the Remembrance of having left a while, or lost, or ill improved it, we must conclude that we have Opportunities of being learned, honest, sober, good and happy Persons; and that it is in our Power, by co-operating with the good Grace of God, to fulfil the Words of the Text in their most literal Sense, and shew that the Administration of this Service supplies the *Necessities of the Saints*, such as are truly so.

It remains, in the second place, that it be *abundant also in many thanksgivings unto God*, and that in the former Method. *First*, By ordering Matters so, that the Distributions of our Benefactors may be an Occasion of glorifying God and our Religion. *Secondly*, That we thank God for our Benefactors; and *Thirdly* and lastly, That we pray for them.

*First*, We must order Matters so, that by the Distributions of our Founders, the Name of God and Christ be glorified. We live not indeed amidst the *Jews* or *Gentiles* now, and consequently cannot either profit them by our good, or scandalize them by our bad Examples, or glorify God by their Conversion. But it may be we live amidst as fullen and perverse, and as ill-natured a Generation as either of the former. For notwithstanding what I said of the Judgment and Opinion of the World in general about our Happiness, yet there want not some that are weak and apt to be offended at, others rejoicing in, our Failings, and watching curiously for our Miscarriages; some causelessly complaining of our Way of Education, some of our Want of Zeal and true Devotion, (one may guess what they mean;) some of our sheltering Ignorance and harbouring Idleness, some of our Usefulness and Insignificancy to the Commonwealth; most of them meaning all the while we are too rich and happy, and calling for a Reformation to the pristine Purity, because they think it will bring the pristine Poverty along with it. So that we have need to walk with all the Care and Circumspection in the world; redeeming the Time (for indeed the Days are evil) losing no Opportunities, but improving our Talents to all Advantages on all Occasions; both fearing God and regarding Man, approving ourselves to ourselves, and providing things honest in the sight of others. Letting our Light shine before Men, adorning our Profession, and living up to the Rules of our Institution; and by these Means, when Men shall see us thus industrious in our Way, thus happily employed in praising and in practising the Rules of Wisdom, Virtue and Religion ourselves, in countenancing and teaching others, in cultivating, watering and improving all those generous and noble Plants they send us hither, and returning them fair and flourishing in all that is good and excellent, when they shall find the Benefit and Comfort of those sweet living Streams that overflow from this *immortal Spring*, they will be tempted sure to change their Minds, discharge their Hearts of their Malignity, glorify God and Christ, and bless the Bounty and the Hand that ministred to so much Good.

*Secondly*, We must be thankful to God for our Benefactors. For though the glorifying God both in our Bodies and Spirits, which are God's, and reflecting Honour on his



holy Name, by a religious sober Usage of their Benefits, be both the best and truest Way of thanking him; yet it is not of itself sufficient, we must express our Gratitude in Ways befitting reasonable and honourable Creatures, agreeable to God, and useful to the World; such as Rejoycing, Praising and Thanksgiving, such as may also edify the Hearers and Standers-by, and may excite them to the Imitation of those Virtues and Excellencies they hear and see extolled in others. And though I did, in reckoning up the Benefits we receive, lay down so many Grounds of our Thanksgiving, and have already mentioned some peculiar Virtues of our Royal Patron; yet I should scarce acquit myself of what I owe to my Society, unless I offer, in its Name, peculiar Thanks and Praise, Honour and Glory to the Eternal Inexhausted Spring of Bounty, for all the Advantages we in particular receive: and sure I should but ill become this Place, answer but ill the Purpose of this Day, if I should suffer Works of such Magnificence to lie in common Heaps of Charity, and be content with general Commendations, passing the good King *Henry* over together with the *Crowd* and *Multitude* of Founders. His Honours should no more be common, undistinguished ones, than were his Merits; his Praises should at least equal his private Virtues, if they may not rise up to his Royal State and his Magnificence. And though each of them singly were a Task, and when conspired and met in one, might rather cause one to despair of being Just, than fear the falling into servile Adulation or Extravagance; yet not to pay down something were intolerable, and to imitate the Iniquity of bad Debtors, that chuse to be unjust to *all* their Creditors, for fear of being so to *some*. And as for Fame, I count a Parsimony of it here were next to Sin; it can be never better spent, it never can be better lost, and no good Man but will say as *Mamertinus* did to *Julian* — *Mellem eloquentiæ Laudem, quam Pietatem officiūque meum desiderari.*

In Compliance therefore with the Text, I thank the Immortal God for that Munificence, by which two Royal Great Societies were founded and endowed: which notwithstanding all the Depredations they have undergone, do yet subsist in fair and honourable Manner, and are, if not the Envy, yet at least Part of the Praise and Glory of their Neighbours; for making a King, a young and mighty King, the Instrument of so much Good; for inspiring into his Soul such Christian and such generous Purposes; instead of all those vain, ambitious, towering Imaginations, those wicked, wanton and luxurious Thoughts, that fill the Heads and Hearts of common Princes; for giving us a Founder, whose Bounty makes us not more happy Men, than his Example would, if followed, happy Christians: for the Advantage of all those excellent Graces and illustrious Virtues that adorned his Life, and shone so eminently in him: for his early Zeal and Piety, his ardent and unparallel'd Devotion towards God: for his innocent and uncorrupted Youth; for his Sanctity, Sobriety and Temperance in every kind; for his great Love to Learning, and greater yet to good Morality and true Religion: for the firm and steady Virtues of his Manhood: for his Care of all his Life; and that incredible Watchfulness over all his Thoughts, and Words, and Works; inasmuch that in twelve Years time, his Confessor found no occasion to enjoin him any sort of Penance: for his ready Resignation to the Will of God in all Conditions, for his admirable Patience under all the Sorrows and Distresses, the Dangers and the Difficulties, the Exiles and Imprisonments, with which his Life was exercised for One and fifty Years: and lastly, for his holy End and Sufferings, being found at his Devotions by that inhuman Prince *Richard III.* that stabb'd him to the Heart, and left expiring out his Soul amidst his Prayers.

These are the Virtues I can thank God for, without a Blush or secret Check for flattering or enlarging. Rare, and unseen in Kings, and read by private Men with Wonder and Confusion: so that I doubt if most of us were left to judge of them by the faint Pursuits and feeble Imitations we have made, there would be great Temptations to conclude against their Truth and Possibility. These are the Virtues, better far besit the Fame and Memory of Christian Kings, than those of glorious Heroes and triumphant Conquerors,  
Enlargers



Enlargers of their Empires, and Terrors of their Generations. For the true *English* of those pompous Titles is, that they have been the Plagues of the Earth, and mighty Murderers of Mankind; that they have made Millions of wretched Widows, Orphans and Relations; have turned fair Kingdoms into Fields of Blood and Horror, and over-run the World with barbarous Waste and Desolation. And though these Bears and Tygers, Wolves and Foxes, are in some manner necessary and useful in the World, and make a glorious Bustle whilst they live, and we are pleased with the Relations of their Acts when dead; (better when dead:) yet no Man in his wits, that can consider, and might chuse his State himself, but would prefer the *Palms* of innocent and suffering Kings, to all the *Laurels* and ensanguined Wreaths of those renowned *Nimrods*. These are the Virtues we can thank God for, because they are so useful, and so edifying to the World; so safe to recommend to all Mankind, but especially so proper for our private Imitation; so suited to our Way of Living, that one would think the godly King had lived on purpose for *our* Use and Service, and that our Statutes had been copied from his Practice, with some Design to shame us into Duty, or make us inexcusable, if we could otherwise abuse such Bounty, neglect such Virtue, and refuse to write after so fair and goodly an Original.

And this is all the Incense I will offer to our Glorious Founder. For tho' I should extract the Quintessence of all the flattering Acclamations of the slavish Senate down from *Augustus* to *Augustulus*; the noblest Flights and most exalted Strains of the Panegyrist from *Pliny* to this Day; the Dedications, the Devices, Mottoes and Inscriptions of our neighbouring Kingdom to their vain-glorious Monarch, or from the servile and degenerate Spirit of Address at home; and could refine upon them all, and raise him up a Monument of Praise, as fair and beautiful, and just withal, as *this* I praise him *in*; yet *ἐν τῇ αἰσχρονομίᾳ*, if there be any Sense or Understanding of our mortal State; if they above receive Accession of Beatitude from any thing we say or do below—— I know his innocent and righteous Soul will take more Joy, be better pleased, if what I have said can either move myself, or any here, to the Improvement of one Grace, the Exercise of one Virtue, or to the Amendment of one evil Practice.

*Lastly*, We must pray to God for our Benefactors. I know very well whither the Application of this Part of the Text would have naturally led me, if I had lived when this great Anniversary was first designed, or a hundred Years after it. It was their Way to share the Time allotted to these Exercises, betwixt the venting trifling and insipid Praises of their Subjects; and they were forced most commonly, for want of Truth, to feign their Virtues first, like those of Heroes in Romances, and then praise them: and betwixt the offering Prayers for Rest and Quiet of the Souls of the Departed, and other such Expressions, as ignorant good Nature, vexed and tormented with Uncertainties, and Hopes and Fears, and tender Scruples, first suggested, and afterwards improved to dangerous and dreadful Superstition: And the Choice of this most solemn Dedication-Day was to have directed me, to whom in Heaven I was to have made my most particular Address. But God be thanked, that Task is spared, those Days are gone, and now past Prospect of Return: the Text means no such thing as praying for the Dead. The good King *Henry* is, if any one, at rest, and wants no Prayers. The ever glorious, ever blessed Virgin, wants nor requires no Service of that nature at our hands. It is God alone that asks, and that deserves that noble Sacrifice, and to him only let us offer it, as is most due, with all Humility of Soul; and beg of him, that we, according to the Example of this righteous Prince, may pass our Lives here in his Faith and Fear, and may with him, and all good Souls, be made Partakers of a glorious Resurrection in the Life to come, through the Merits and Intercession of our adored Redeemer Jesus Christ: To whom with the Holy Ghost be ascribed all Honour, Praise and Glory, now and for evermore. *Amen.*



## S E R M O N

Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at St. Margaret's Westminster, on Thursday the 5th of November, 1691.

JOHN xvi. Part of the 2<sup>d</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup> Verses.

*Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service; and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.*

**T**HIS day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears: For either we are met to no purpose, or (which is worse) to a very bad one, to mock and play with God; or we are met to celebrate with Praise and Thanksgiving the Deliverance of our Church and Nation, from one of the most execrable Attempts that ever was inspired into the Heart of Man by our great Enemy the Devil, or brought to light by the good Providence of God; an Attempt of such unusual Cruelty and Horror, that nothing but the Distance of Time, and a cold Indifference for things past and gone, could let us think thereon without such Indignation and such Fury, as were not fit for Christian Hearts to harbour; an Attempt, that nothing but the *English* Mercy could have forgiven: No Laws, no Nation but our own, but would have pursued the Authors and Abettors of such cursed Principles, with such severe Vengeance, as would have fully and effectually secured themselves from any second Fears, or second Dangers from that Side; an Attempt, of which I shall say but a very poor and low thing, when I shall have said, No Age, no History, no Country in the World can parallel it. If I would raise this Attempt as high as Justice will permit me, and aggravate the thing according to the Truth, I must say, it was such an Attempt, as the Jesuits themselves are ashamed of, and begin, tho' somewhat faintly, to extenuate and deny; and then I neither can, nor need to say more: For if those Men, whom God, for the Sins of Mankind, hath permitted to compass the World, to overturn Kingdoms, to disturb the Peace and Society of Men, to destroy Morality, to corrupt and stifle Christianity; to settle Wickedness by Principles, and establish Sin by a Law; if such, I say, once come to extenuate or deny an Attempt, inspired by Men of their own Order (and one of them at least Beatified) and to have been acted by their own Disciples, there must needs be so much Hell, and Horror in the Composition of the Fact, that no good Man can well express it or conceive it: and yet, to come to my Text, *It was done by men, that thought they thereby did God service.*

Our Lord being about to leave this World, and to go unto the Father, thought good to prepare his Disciples for that sad parting, by telling them beforehand what he himself must shortly undergo, by the Rage and Fury of the wicked Priests and Governors, with the Necessity and Benefits of those Sufferings; and afterwards what they themselves must look for, if they would take up his Cross, and be his Disciples. *Remember the word that I have said unto you, the Servant is not greater than his Lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: and afterwards sums up the whole in these Words,*



Words, *They shall put you out of the Synagogue*, that is, they shall excommunicate you; yea, *the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service*; το νεῖμα ὑμῶν καὶ τὸ θεῶ ἀρέσκειν, saith St. Chrysostom on the Place, *a mighty religious Matter, and a thing that will please God*: An expiatory Offering, as the Original may import, and a Sacrifice that will atone for Sins: *And these things they will do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me*. So that we see our Saviour assigns the Jewish Ignorance of God and of himself, to be the Cause and Reason of all the Evils and Barbarities himself and his Disciples were to meet withal: These things will they do unto you, *because they know not the Father, nor me*.

*To know, or not to know the Father, and Christ*, is taken in a great many different Senses in the Holy Scriptures, too many, and of too little Use at present, to recount: Those only that are pertinent to the Design in Hand, and our Saviour's Words, must be such Senses and Acceptations, as would influence the Jews to the Cruelties and Persecutions foretold in this Place. The Jews could not be said, *not to know God*, in such a Sense as to deny his Being; for never People knew him better, never was God so present to a Nation, as to theirs; *The Lord thy God hath chosen thee* (saith Moses in Deut. vii. 6.) *to be a special people to himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth*: There was such frequent and familiar Commerce betwixt God and them, by Voices, Visions, by Angels and inspired Prophets, and by other Ways, that it would be the improperest Way of speaking in the World, to say of the Jews, they knew not God, with respect to his Essence, or their acknowledging a Deity: Nor could it be said, with any Colour of Truth, in our Saviour's Time, that the Jews knew not God, in the Sense it is often used in Scripture, to reproach the World with forsaking the only true God, and serving other Gods: for the Jews were never freer from Idolatry, than in our Saviour's Days; nay, and had been for many Years before; and that good Humour has continued since for almost Seventeen hundred Years; and amidst all their great Impieties, their wide and wonderful Dispersions, and their deplorable Calamities, they have still retained the Worship of One and the True God, with greater Simplicity, than Abundance of the Christian World for many Ages, to its great Shame. *Not to know God*, therefore in this Place, must in all Reason signify, not so to know him, as to conceive right Notions of him, or form a Judgment suitable to the excellent extensive Goodness of the Divine Nature; *and not to know the Father*, is, not to attend to, or comprehend sufficiently the Dispensation and Oeconomy of God the Father, in saving them and all Mankind, by sending his Son Christ Jesus into the World; and *not to know the Son*, is, not to receive and believe on him that was thus sent, for their Deliverance. These Heads I shall insist on in the first Place; and in the second, try to shew how such Barbarities and cruel Usages as are here foretold, may proceed from the aforesaid Heads; and lastly, apply myself to the Business of the Day.

First then, the Jews may properly be said, not to know God, as not conceiving aright of his extensive Goodness towards all the World. They were certainly a People of the most gross Capacity, most sensual Apprehension, fleshliest Heart, and slowest understanding in the World; and God in Compliance to this stupid Temper, dealt with them accordingly, wrought Miracles continually amongst them, and gave them almost every Day some sensible Token or other of his favourable Presence; and if he slackned but his Arm never so little a while, he was fain to be at the Expence of some new Miracle, or some great Judgment, even to convince them of his Goodness, or his Power again. The whole 78th Psalm, which is an Epitome of their History, may confirm the Truth of what I have said. Now God by this material, as it were, and sensible familiar Way of treating and conversing with them, came to be thought, in Time, their Local God, their proper and peculiar Deity, and was called and accounted by themselves, as well as by the Nations round them, *the God of the Jews*, the God of Abraham, and their God,



in a hundred Places, and *our* God, in as many or more, not only in Contradistinction to the Gods of the Heathen, or that he favoured them infinitely above all the Nations of the Earth besides; for the first was very reasonable, and the second very true; but by way of Exclusion to all the World besides, as though he had no Care of, or Regard to any other Part of Mankind, and only exercised his Vengeance on their Enemies, now and then, as he or they saw fit. Now this was a narrow Notion of God's Providence, and far unworthy the immense Benignity of the divine Nature, which loves and governs all the World, though not (we think) with equal, yet with great Care and Tenderness, and Wisdom; proportioning his Favours not to Peoples Merits, but their Necessities, and to his own Mercies. Now though this *Jewish* Selfishness and Humour of appropriating God's Goodness to themselves, may seem of itself to be of little Consequence or Moment, yet I believe it will appear, that the Fruits of it, were not only the being obstinate and proud themselves, but the scorning, and the hating all Mankind besides: for so light and unbalanced is the Mind of Man, that even a Gust of Favour from an earthly Prince, drives him away and tosses him he knows not whither, and makes him proud and insupportable, and sets him on despising, and it may be, trampling on the World about him: and though the Reason be not the same, yet the Effects are much alike in the Case of God's Favours: The Insolence of spiritual Pride is extravagant and insufferable, and an overweening Conceit of being extremely high in God's Love and Favour, and one of his peculiar Saints and Creatures, is the most dangerous Rock a Soul can dash against; and has oftentimes proved more fatal, than some downright Vice; it is the Parent of intolerable Arrogance, *stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou*, II. lxxv. 5. It is the Mother of Scorn and ill Nature; *God I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican*, Luke xviii. 11. and the Passage from this Spirit of Pride and Contempt, to that of Hatred and Violence is short and easy, the Line that divides them almost imperceptible.

Again, God had prohibited their Commerce, in a great Degree, with any of the Nations round about, which they obeying, became, in some Time, churlish, ill-natured and untractable, (for nothing polishes and evens so the Roughness of Mens morose Tempers, as Trafficking and Conversation) and not attending or observing, that the Reason of God's Prohibition was from the Proneness of their Hearts to Idolatry, and falling so easily into the Worship of the People they conversed withal, they thought it was only because those *Gentiles* were profane, hated of God, and an Abomination in his Sight; which though it were true of all their evil Practices, and sinful Customs, yet it was by no means true of their Persons: but of all Things in the World ill Nature is the worst Distinguisher, it will not separate Sin from Sinners, nor abstract the Person from his Faults. God has declared his Hatred and Abhorrence of a great many particular Crimes, and is Wise, and Just, and Merciful enough to love and pity an Offender, even whilst he hates and punishes the Offence: but an impotent malicious Man, can do nothing of all this, yea thinks himself obliged to hate and persecute to Death, those whose Offences God declares against: but sure the Reason is as weak as the Malice is strong. For what if God should hate a Man, how does it follow I must hate him too, unless commanded? It is true, God is the best Example I can follow, but his Judgments are unsearchable and his Ways past finding out, and he has always Reasons, but yet not always such as may justify my Imitation. But as unreasonable, and undue a Consequence as this appears, yet it is a very frequent Slip; and all Men think they have a Right, as well as the *Jews*, to say with *David*, *Do not I hate them that rise up against thee? yea I hate them right fore, as though they were mine enemies*. Which though it be reasonable and necessary to apply to the Wickedness and evil Practices of Men dishonouring and defaming God and his Worship, yet the Compliment would go too far, from Civility to God,

to



to Cruelty and Hatred of our Neighbour. Farther, as God continually was pouring down his Benefits and Favours on the *Jews* whilst they continued firm and constant in his Service, so he pursued their light Apostasies, their Startings and their Revolts, with Punishments as close and constant: And the Nature of Man which is much more querulous than grateful, more sensible of one Evil than of an hundred Benefits, and always prone to conclude on the worse Side, prompted the *Jews* to look on God, as on an angry and vindictive Being, and one that seemed delighted in Justice, rather than forgiving; and seeing he required Obedience with such Exactness, and punished their Offences with Rigor, they easily imagined they must be as zealous in his Service, and as jealous of his Honour, as possibly they could, and consequently must revenge all such Affronts and Indignities done to his mighty Name and holy Majesty, with all Severity; and though this may be good to a very great Degree, yet there is Danger it may pass into an ill Extreme; and ignorant and impotent Man knows no Mean, but finding that to be in some Measure his Duty, which is partly his natural Inclination, he runs with all his Might, and never thinks of stopping, and that is the Reason that a great deal of Zeal degenerates very easily into Anger and Cruelty; it is only adding Fuel to a little and a gentle Flame kindled before, such as is Zeal, and it will in Time, a little Time, become a spreading and consuming Fire.

I am very sensible that these Productions and Effects, may seem at first too mighty for the Causes assigned; but to one that well and thoroughly considers human Nature, with all its Folly, Malice and Imperfection, I am afraid they will appear too adequate and just. A little Spring sends out a mighty Stream, and a small Seed grows up into a tall and shady Cedar. A Mean, and at first, unheeded Principle, becomes in Time the Bottom and Foundation of a marvelous Superstructure, and brings forth Fruits and Consequences not easily prevented or avoided afterwards. Let any Man but call to mind, what a little Matter it was at first, that biassed him to incline to such a Cause or Party, and how that Inclination carried him to wishing well, and that to Affection, and Affection to siding with it, and that to Zeal, and Zeal to the promoting and advancing it, and that to opposing all its Hindrances, and Opposition to Vexation, and that to ill Will, and ill Will to Mischief, and that to Hatred, and thence to Violence and Outrage, and Cruelty, and Persecution. Let a Man, I say, but trace his own Heart at such a Rate as this, and he will find a little inconsiderable Cause, sufficient to produce the most astonishing Effects. And of all Causes, none so fruitful and productive as those that border on Religion, and call in God into their Interests and Party; no Mistakes so fatal and so desperate in their Consequences, as those that are built on misapplied Scripture, false Conceptions of God's Nature, with unworthy and dishonourable Thoughts of any of his Attributes. For, as I intimated before, Man thinks himself naturally obliged (and is undoubtedly so, where he can with Reason) to imitate and draw as near to his God as possibly he may: and therefore will, as near as can be, conform his inward and his outward Behaviour, to the Notions and Conceptions he has of God's Nature. Some barbarous *Gentiles* of old, conceived God to be an angry sanguinary Being, and the Consequence was, they were inhuman in their Manners, and worshipped him with horrid Rites, and human Sacrifices: and others gentle and benign, because they thought their Deity was Merciful and Good. And therefore it is of mighty Use and Benefit in all Respects, that Men should be taught to conceive nothing of God, but what is just and honourable, merciful and good. And he may very properly be said *not to know God*, that conceives any hard unworthy thing of him.

Secondly, The *Jews* are said, *Not to know the Father*, because they did, or rather would, not know and understand the Dispensation and Oeconomy of God the Father, designing to save the World by sending his Son Christ Jesus into it; they were so strongly persuaded that their Law was to last for ever, that they could not entertain so much as a  
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are soon tired, to exchange some easy corporal Gestures, and artificial Motions, for the sober Exercises of the Mind by Prayer and Contemplation, and the Painfulness of close Attention: To give up the easy Commutation and Atonements of Sins and Trespases, by the Lives and Sacrifices of brute Beasts, for the bitter Sorrows of Repentance, and the most solid and expensive Sacrifice of Prayers, and Tears, and Satisfaction, seemed to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and *Sadducees* and *Priests*, a very hard Exchange, and an intolerable Bargain: And therefore it is no wonder, that Men so sensually affected and tied to the Things of this World, should oppose themselves with so much Might and Vigor, to the Preachers of such mortifying spiritual Doctrines: And that rather than be disturbed in their Pursuits, than lose what they liked and loved, and accept of what they could not endure to think on, they should conspire the Death of our Lord the Author, and his Disciples the Promoters of them. Again, these Priests, these Scribes, and Doctors of the Law, had corrupted the *Jewish* Religion to a prodigious Height: They had darkened all the Prophecies of the Messiah's coming in such meek and lowly Manner as he came: The Sadducees, a mighty and a prevailing Sect, denied the Resurrection of the Dead, the Existence of Angels and Spirits, and yet were good *Jews* still, and some of them came to be High-Priests; and all of them by their vain and wicked Traditions, ungracious Comments, and ungodly Glosses, had almost killed Morality at the Root. And our Saviour boldly reprehending this ungodly Practice, and laying open before all the People their enormous Villanies herein, so stirred their Indignation, that they resolved upon his Death. The Reputation of Sincerity and Honesty is a tender Point, and like the Eye, will not endure the least Touch: Tell a Man he is Vicious, and he will laugh; say he is a Sot, and Lewd, and an unkind Relation, and he will forget it quickly; but tell him he is a Villain and a Knave, a Cheat and Impostor, and you fill his Heart with Rage and Rancour, and treasure up Wrath against an Opportunity to destroy your self. What? tell the High-Priest, the infallible High-Priest, the prophesying High-Priest, the Successor of *Aaron* and of *Moses* too at this Time, the Man to whom were committed the Oracles of *God*; tell him, that in *Cathedra*, with his Conclave, nay with his Sanhedrim, that he had grossly erred in interpreting Scriptures, in darkning Prophecies, in corrupting Morality, and cheating the People, is not to tempt a Danger at a Distance, but boldly enter on Destruction, when you have to deal with Men that neither will, nor think they can amend. Lastly, These Men were in present Possession of the highest Honours, and Places (it is no doubt) of Interest and Advantage. And our Saviour's Doctrine seeming to overthrow their whole Oeconomy, and put an End to all the ceremonious Part of *Moses* his Law, and all the civil Power, as much as depended thereon, it is not to be wonder'd at if they grew jealous and afraid of the rooting and spreading of Christ's Doctrine, and took the most effectual Means, in human Policy, to rid themselves of the threatening Danger, by putting him to Death. For as naturally as Men abhor from shedding of Blood, so, or more naturally do they love their Honours and their Interest; and if these cannot be secured without that, they seldom or never stick or startle at it.

And now having shewn, as the Time would let me, in what Senses the *Jews* might be said not to have known God, not to have known the Father nor the Son, and how those Kinds of Ignorance came to produce such barbarous Fruits, and bloody Usage of our Saviour and his Followers, and done what Right I could to the Text: I am come in the third and last Place to apply it to the Business of this Day. But oh! how far from the Design of Christ in speaking these Words, from the Intention of the blessed Spirit dictating, and from the charitable Saints that left them to us in his Gospel. Who in the World that hath ever heard or read the Conflicts, Torments, painful Agonies, and Deaths of all the Apostles but *St. John*, would not have hoped the Prophecy in my Text had received its full and last Completion in their Martyrdoms? But who at least would not have hoped 300



Years had been sufficient Time, and that the *Jews* and *Gentiles* only should have been its barbarous Executioners and Fulfillers? Had not our Saviour been all-knowing God himself, one would have ventured to say he could not possibly foresee, that Christians should in Tract of Time become the most exact and literal Accomplishers of this his Prophecy, that ever should be in the World, and that to none but Christians? *The time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service; and this will they do, because they have not known the Father nor me.* That is the Text. What an absurd Comment would this be — *The Time cometh when my Religion shall prevail over the Jews and Gentiles Rage and Persecution, and most of the World shall have given their Names to me, and become Christians; then whosoever killeth you Christians, will think he doth God and me his Christ Service; and this will they do, because they, and they alone are infallibly certain they know the Father and me, and are resolved that no body shall dare to know the Father and me, in any other Way, or Mode, or Form of speaking but their own.* And yet as absurd as this Comment seems, and truly is, yet it is just in every Syllable; for it is not I that made it, but the Practice of the christian World for some hundreds of Years past; and the present Age hath refined upon the Absurdity in great Measure, and writ the wicked Nonsense in Characters so large, that he that runs may read. Who was it that butchered most inhumanly the *Albigenses*, and the Poor of *Lyons*, with such Barbarity, that though the Relations come from Monks, yet they would move a Heart of Stone? Who was it totally extinguished Protestantism in all *Moravia*, *Silesia* and *Bohemia*? Who was it that barbarously dispersed its Flocks, and more than barbarously used its Ministers, and laid its Temples waste and desolate in *Hungary*? Who was it massacred the *Hugonots* in *France* in 1572. and have taken effectual Care of later Days, that we shall never more reproach their Cruelty, by leaving there no more to massacre? Who were the Kindlers of those fierce devouring Flames in our *Queen Mary's* Days, that consumed so many living human Sacrifices; and who were Authors of the *Irish* Massacre? *Christians!* What were the Wretches that were treated thus but *Christians*? And wherefore, but that they thought they did God Service in so using them? If we should yet proceed to enquire upon what Grounds and Reasons Christians go, when they pursue each other to Death, and find it is, because some know the Father and the Son in one, and others in another Way; and the stronger will impose his Way of knowing on the weaker, or else he shall not know at all; a considering Man must stand amazed, and have a very mean Opinion both of human Reason and the christian Institution: And yet the Case is neither better nor worse than so. One knows the Father and the Son in Pomp and ceremonious Ostentation of external Worship; and another in Plainness and Simplicity: One serves him by the means of Images and gorgeous Representations; another worships him in Spirit and in Truth: One takes his necessary Doctrines from Tradition's Mouth; another from the Oracles of God alone: One forms his Notions of a Church, from what his Fancy tells him were convenient it should be; another takes it as he plainly finds it, and is content with the Wisdom of God, which often seems but Foolishness to Man: One interestes Saints and Angels in his behalf to God the Father, together with the Mediation of the Son; another thinks that God the Son is sufficient of himself, being as powerful as willing to save to the utmost all that call upon him. One will have all the Sacrament in both Kinds, as it is certain Christ distributed it, and his Disciples, and the Church after them for many Ages: Another gives but half, but says it is the whole to all Intents and Purposes, arguing with Subtily and much Distinction in a Matter wholly of Institution and Revelation. One takes that Sacrament, and believes it is a Mystery, and certainly made what our Lord designed, and what the Words effect with Prayer: Another takes it, and believes that God hath made himself, which yet destroys the very Notion and Nature of a God, by confounding the greatest Proof we have of such a Being, as neither had nor can have a Beginning: And that when he is thus made anew, Man takes him in his Mouth, and



swallows down into his Stomach the Son of Man, of thirty three Years of Age, and the eternal Son of God, by whom he made, by whom he redeemed the World; with Abundance of other plain distinct Doctrines as any in the World; yet calls it, after that, a Mystery. And what is the Event of all this Contrariety? Why, that they who know the Father and the Son one Way, should not endure that any one should know them in another Way, and live. It is in vain to tell them, that you guide your self by the Light of Nature, and make the best Use you can of your Reason, and call in the Aids of Learning and an honest Mind, and submit to whatever appears to be plainly revealed: This will not do; you must believe, or dissemble, or die; if you have not Faith or Knavery, you must have Patience and Courage, to attend to the last Reasons of Fire, and Sword, and Halts. Sure it is impossible that Christ our gracious, merciful, adorable Redeemer, should leave the Bosom of the Father, where he reigned in everlasting Love and Unity, to come and sow the Seeds of Strife and Discord upon Earth! That he should take upon him human Nature, to divest it for ever after of the Bowels of Compassion! That he should descend to instruct the World in new unheard-of Lessons of Barbarity! That he should design to abrogate the Sacrifice of Beasts, and spare their Lives, to substitute the Lives of Men, and satiate his incensed Father, with the horrid Steams of human Blood, and let his own be shed, to teach us how to pour out one another's on the Ground, like Water! He should not have been born of such a sweet and gentle Maid, nor sucked the Breasts of any human Female; he found the World in better Order, and ruled by milder Principles: And if these Things be so, he will give us leave, as there is Reason, to say with respect to the Concerns of this Life, good had it been for Men he never had been born. But God forbid Things should be so! Heaven is not farther distant from the lowest Hell, the Purity of GOD himself from the Pollutions of the vilest Sinner, than bloody Principles and Practices are from Christ's Religion. Of all the Constitutions and religious Dispensations, and Oeconomies, that ever were contrived by Men, or revealed by God, there is none so little able to support the deadly Weight of *Inhumanity*, as the Christian is. The very Incarnation of our Saviour preaches up Love and Goodness, in the loudest Tone, and most affecting and surprizing Manner in the World. The Angels sang not only *glory be to God on high*, but *peace on earth, and good-will towards men*; and that not only in respect of God, but of one another. Never was Life more full of Sweetness and Humanity! His Doctrine was all Peace, and his Practice one continued Act of going *about* and *doing good*. Love was his old, his new, his first, his middle, and his last Command; Love was his living Exercise, and Love his dying Legacy. It was the Badge and Cognizance of those that truly followed him, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*. And to be sure he did not mean Men should distinguish so exactly as they do, the Love of their Neighbours Souls, from that of their Bodies. It had been wretched trifling and unworthy of our Lord, or any good Man, to have so frequently pressed the Duty of loving one another, if he intended only loving of their Souls. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you love one another's souls*, though ye torment their Bodies Days and Years, by Tortures, Racks, and Engines, by burning, strangling, and blowing up, or any other exquisite ingenious Way of murdering them: This I say, had been unfit for Christ, or any good and sober Person to intend; and only worthy of the villanous Subtilty and tender Nicety of the Fathers of the Inquisition, who whilst the Eye-balls of the Sufferers in that sanctified Hell, are rolling in Death, and starting from their Orbs, and their Souls expiring amidst the Torments, stand kindly by, and with wondrous Charity beseech the Executioners, by the tender Mercies of God, and by the Bowels of our Lord, to take great heed they shed not a Drop of christian Blood. As if the tender Mercies of our God, and the Bowels of our Lord, were not an Adjuration strong enough to move Compassion for the Body as well as the Soul, and for other Ways of killing as well as shedding Blood. No, if the Spirit of Christ and his Religion be to be discovered in



in the Gospel and the sacred Writings of the Apostles, let Men pretend never so much to know the Father and the Son, yet if their Principles and Practices tend to Blood and Cruelty, and let them be never so firmly persuaded in their Minds that they do God service, we may as certainly conclude they do not know the Father nor the Son, as we may that there are such Persons in the Godhead.

If then, for the Credit of Nature, for the Honour of human Reason, and for the Truth and Sanctity of Christ's Religion, we must acquit them of all Blood and Barbarism, where must we lay, on what must we discharge the Horrors of this Day? To what must we attribute those perpetual Plots and dark Contrivances, to trouble the Felicities, and rob the Nation of the precious Life of our immortal maiden Queen; who, though her Reign were long as it was glorious, yet might have almost marked and counted every Year, by some Attempt of some ungodly Messenger from *Rome*, or Factor for their Partizans? It were endless, and useless too, to dwell on the particular Disturbances, and strong Concussions, that this Nation in especial Sort, hath felt from that ambitious, restless, and blood-thirsty Party. My Design is rather to repeat in short the Grounds from whence they all proceed. 1. The Decrees of general Councils. 2. The Bulls of Popes against whole Nations, or particular Persons. 3. The private Doctors Writings and Authority. 4. The Encouragement the Attempters find, if they succeed, in this World; if they miscarry, in the next.

Whether the Councils I intend, and that are so frequently cited for this Purpose, do decree the Extirpation of Heresy, in so absolute Terms as to lay a Necessity on Princes and Governors to perform, is a Dispute I need not engage in; it is enough, and even too much in Conscience, if they have left the Matter in such loose uncertain Terms, that they whose Interest, misguided Zeal, or sanguinary Tempers, shall incline them to such Attempts, may find their Excuse, and take their Sanctuary in those Terms. The Government of *Tunis, Tripoli, of Salle, Argiers*, are far from making any Laws expressly to command their Subjects the Exercise of Piracies and Robberies; yet they are practised every Day, and an honest Man would go near to die, that should reproach them with it; and yet no Man can clear them of the Injustice and Violence. And that some Councils have gone farther than this, it is agreed upon by all our own Writers, and taken amiss by a great many of our Adversaries if questioned, and denied with a very ill Grace by any of them. And if Councils which have obtained amongst them the greatest Veneration, and which if well and rightly managed, would deserve, and find it too from us, and all the sober World besides, if they shall but seem to countenance, much more command, such cruel and unnatural Things; the greater their Authority is, the greater will the Mischiefs be, the worse the Consequences; and who shall deliver their Souls from them?

Secondly, That Popes, to gratify their Spleen, Ambition or Revenge, have by their Bulls, excited Princes to exterminate their Subjects, and Subjects to rebel and rise against their Kings; and thereby caused horrible Devastations, inhuman Massacres, and overflowed the World with Seas of christian Blood, is so plain and manifest, that it is as often confessed with glorying in the Power, as denied with Abhorrence of the Fact. And it is but turning to the Chronicles of any Nation in the World, to find the exorbitant Power, and ill-got Credit of these Sovereign High-Priests, have been the Causes of as many Evils, publick and private, as any Thing in the World besides.

A third Occasion or Ground of these Disturbances and barbarous Practices, is the Writings and Authority of the Doctors in Request. A Professor of *Lovain* wrote a Book of late, on Purpose to prove, that abundantly more had written in Defence and Maintenance of the deposing Doctrine, than against it; afraid, one would think, we should be mistaken, and think it possible for the true *Roman* Catholicks to be good Subjects. But there is an Order of Men, so famous for these Sort of Writings and accu-  
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fed Labours, and for the Guidance of Men's Consciences, and consequently governing the World, that seem in such peculiar Manner to have appropriated the Power and Principles of Blood and Mischief to themselves, that it were a Kind of Trespas and Affront to their Wit and Policy, their Pride, Ambition, their Malice, and Revenge, to attribute any of our publick Evils to any other primary Cause, and first Original. *It cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem*, said Christ: *It cannot be that any mighty Mischief, any Master-Piece of Wickedness, should be done without that Order*, says all the Christian World. *I came not to send peace, but a sword*, said our Lord, that is, by Accident, and fore against his Will; but these Men give us such a Scheme of Christianity, as makes the Sword seem natural, designed, and necessary. *Be ye wise as serpents*, said our Lord, *and innocent as doves*; but these Men have refined on Wisdom, and the Cunning of the World, to that Degree, that they seem to have understood our Saviour, as exhorting to the Imitation of the old Serpent, and the red Dragon, bending their Studies wholly to the Confusion of the World. *My kingdom is not of this world*, said Christ. *All kingdoms of the earth, say they, are Christ's; and in his Name will we tread them under, that rise up against us*. To be short, whilst these Men's Writings are in Vogue, and the Consciences of Men committed to their Guidance, the Christian World must never look for Peace; and if God, in Pity to the World, prevent not the Growth of their abominable Doctrines and Designs, when the Son of Man cometh, he shall neither find Morality nor Faith on Earth.

The last Foundation of our Dangers, and Disturbances, that I will mention, is the Encouragement the bold Attempters meet withal, if they succeed, in this Life; if miscarry, in another. Riches and Honours are such powerful Motives and Temptations, that sometimes the reputed wise and brave and generous Souls, are vanquished by them: But when they meet with needy and ambitious ones, they find them ready and prepared before-hand for the Wickedness; or if these are not for the turn, there are others of a dark and clouded Soul, eat up with desperate melancholy Thought, and overwhelmed with Zeal and Sadness; which Tempers moulded artificially by ravishing Descriptions of the Joys of Heaven, and worked into a lively Hope, nay Certainty, of once possessing them, are fit for all the Impressions in the World, and stick at nothing for the gaining them. And then, if Poisoning, Stabbing, or cutting of Throats, be represented meritorious of Heaven, they will quickly find, or make an Opportunity, although the Way leads to the Paths of certain Death, with Torments. And that these Courses have been taken, amongst a hundred other Witnesses, the dark Contrivance of this Day shall rise in Judgment and attest.

These are, I think, the chief, though not the only Arguments that have all along influenced the Sons of Violence to our Destruction more or less, and always will, till God give them the Grace to renounce the wicked Principles they build upon, and instruct them truly in the Knowledge of himself, and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For without this mighty Operation of God's Spirit on their Understanding and their Wills, to think that they who never failed of being cruel where they could with Safety, who never spared a Nation or a Country yet, will now, or any time grow merciful and kind, is to hope *the Ethiopian may change his skin, and the leopard his spots, and they do good who are accustomed to do evil*.

Let us then (to conclude) be just to the Memory of this Day, and keep it from the Fate of obsolete and antiquated Things. It was of late endeavoured to be laughed and frowned out of Countenance and Credit; and had not God in his all-wise Disposal of Affairs, marked it anew with a peculiar and most signal Providence, and made it memorable once again, by bringing on it, to our Shoars, our brave and generous Prince, to save us from the same (though now more open and more manly) Enemies; this Day had, doubtless, by the imperious Sway of some, the vile and criminal Compliance of others, and by the Acquiescence and the cold Indifference of the rest, been wholly raz-



zed from out our Kalendar, and in a little time denied as confidently by them all, as it has been of latter Days by some. But if such Matters of Fact, so publicly and notoriously attested, are to be disbelieved, and discredited so soon, that the Ashes of our Forefathers, the designed Sacrifices of this Day, are scarcely cold in their Graves; what Faith shall be given to these Men's Histories of past or present, or of Times to come? Let us then be just to the Mercies of God, doubled this Day upon our Heads, and gratefully remember these Deliverances past, and study to walk worthily for the Time to come; that we tempt him not by Infidelity, Unthankfulness, or Wickedness, to deliver us over into the Will of our Adversaries. Let us be just to our Religion, and that Knowledge of the Father and the Son, to which we have already attained by the Light and Understanding of the Gospel. Let us have the Principles of Blood and Mischief in all the Abhorrence and Abomination in the World, as becometh those that profess the Gospel of Christ. Let us hinder them from taking Effect, by all the lawful and the honest Means allowed us: Let us say of them and their Religion (as far as it is not Christian) what dying Jacob said of his two Sons, *Simeon and Levi: Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations: O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: For in their anger they slay men, and in their self-will dig down walls: cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel.* But let us withal, put in Practice all those Lessons of Peace, and Love, and Gentleness, of Mercy, and Compassion, and Forgiveness, that our Religion urges and obliges us to: Let us heap Coals of Fire and fervent Charity upon their Heads; and let them see and know we are not more reformed from the Corruptions of their Doctrines, and their superstitious Practices, than from their Doctrines of ill Nature, and their Practices of Cruelty and Blood. We shall in vain pretend to distinguish our selves by Name and Party, if we change not Nature and Condition: We must not think to exclaim on their Uncharitableness and Cruelty, to exercise our own. Tumults, and Rage, and Fierceness, and Destruction, are as innocent and christian in *Romish* Hands and Hearts, as they are in Protestants; and it may be so much the more, by how much the less we pretend to them: and wretched are we if we condemn in them what we approve and what we allow of in our selves. If then we would convince the World and them, that we know the Father and the Son as we ought to know, we must pursue the Things that make for Love, and Peace, and Unity. Which the God of Peace grant we may all of us do, for the Sake of him who came to preach it to us: To whom, with the blessed Spirit, be all Honour and Glory, Might and Dominion, now and for ever.



A

## S E R M O N

Preached at *Christ-Church*, before the Governors  
of that Hospital, on *St. Stephen's Day*, 1690.

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To the Right Worshipful Sir JOHN MOOR, Kn<sup>t</sup>.  
and Alderman, President of *Christ's Hospital*,  
*London*; To the Worshipful MATTHEW  
HAWES, Esq; the Treasurer; and to the rest  
of the Worshipful Governors of the said Hospital.

GENTLEMEN,

**I**T was with great Readiness that I undertook the preaching of this Annual Sermon, and it is not with any great Reluctance that I submit to the Printing it: I propose the same End, and entertain the same Hopes, of doing good by it now, as I did then; and somewhat the more I promise my self, by how much farther it may chance to spread. I am loth to say, that the Absence of a great many Persons whom I looked for, whom Custom, and the Obligation of their Trust should call together on these solemn good Occasions, might furnish me with an Excuse for making publick this Discourse, if otherwise I wanted one: For if it be necessary Men should hear these Things, we must pursue them when they fly from us, and give them Opportunities out of Course, when they will not take them in the appointed Seasons. But I hope there is no need of any Excuse for doing this. It is an excellent Subject I have taken in Hand, and greatly concerns us all, but those especially whom God hath blessed with great Estates. Whether I have treated it well or no, will best be seen by its Effects; for if that be the best Sermon which brings forth the best Fruits, it will depend entirely upon You, whether this shall be a good one or no. Make it, I intreat you in the Name of God, as good as possibly you can; and let the Poor and Needy in their several Kinds, both see and feel that you like and love to practise, as well as read, a Sermon upon Charity.

The God of Mercy and Compassion keep and bless you, for your Care and Faithfulness, in the discharging that good Trust reposed in you, and raise you up continually Benefactors, to support the constant great Expence that you are at, to the Glory of his Great Name, the Honour of our Holy Church and Nation, and this great City in especial Manner, and to the Comfort of his poor and needy Servants.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most Affectionate, and

most Humble Servant,

W. FLEETWOOD.



## GALAT. VI. 10.

*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

**S**AINTE Paul being about to conclude his Letter to the *Galatians*, and having heard (it is very likely) that the Pastors of that Church were much neglected, exhorts them to the exercise of due and decent Liberality towards the Ministry; in the 6th Verse, *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth, in all good things.* Agreeable to what he saith, 1 Cor. ix. 11. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple; and they which wait at the Altar, are partakers of the things of the Altar?* And, lest any one should object, that this refers to the Jewish Practice, and concerneth not the Christians; he adds in the 14th Verse, *Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.*

And foreseeing what Excuses and Pretences Men would make; some, That their Families were to be maintained; others, that they had not wherewithal; and all of them shifting it off, as well as they could; he proceeds in the 7th, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; Do not think it such a light and trifling Matter, this that I have mentioned: God will not suffer himself to be despised and mocked in the Persons of his Ministers: Luke x. 6. He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me; i. e. God, saith our Saviour.* And though he may for a while defer his Judgments, yet he will one Day, in its proper Season, punish the Contempts and Injuries that are poured upon his Servants. And lest they should think that all that goes besides their own Hands, were lost, and so should be with-held from contributing, as they should, and ought to do; He tells them, That whilst they were doing good, they were, in a manner, sowing, what in Time would rise up to a plenteous Harvest: That it was not thrown away, that they advanced to this, or any other good Purpose; that they served a very righteous and a faithful Master, one that would not forget their Labour of Love, in ministering to good Ends, and good People; One that was able, and engaged by frequent Promises, to make them good Amends, and fair Returns, for all the Expences they should be at, on his Account: And one that on the other hand would take a strict Account, how it was they spent the Stock he made them Stewards of in this Life, how they employed the Talents he committed to their Trust: *For what a man soweth, that shall he reap: For, He that soweth to the flesh, He that considers nothing but the Necessities, Conveniencies and Pleasures of this Life, without Regard to, or Provision for the next; he that seeketh his own only, and looks after nothing but himself, and mindeth neither God, nor God's Servants, shall of the flesh reap corruption: The Harvest shall be answerable to the Seed sown, he shall heap together what shall come at last to nothing. Whereas he that soweth to the spirit, he that liveth a spiritual Life, whose Heart is with God, whose Thoughts are above, and who mindeth heavenly Things, and whose Actions consequently are guided by God's Rule, and accordingly does all the good he can; this Man shall, from this spiritual Seed, reap life everlasting.* And then by Way of Encouragement he adds, *And let us not be weary of well-doing; whilst we are here on Earth, let us be doing all the good we can; let us with Chearfulness and Readiness of Mind be exercising our Charity to good People, and sowing to the Spirit all we can; for in due time we shall reap.* The Apostle persists in his Metaphor still, and distinguishes the Seasons of sowing, and of reaping; Now is the Time of sowing whilst we live, now is the Season of doing good, whilst Christ in his Gospel shines up-  
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on us in this Life; and the Time of reaping is that to come. *Solomon* says, that *he who observeth the winds, shall never sow*; Eccl. xi. 4. And he that will, in like manner, wait till the World goes well with good Men, and all Things succeed to the Desires of the charitable and bounteous Person, before he will do good, shall never do any good at all; for Men will always be unthankful, and the World will always return evil for good: And therefore, that we should not be weary of well-doing, the Apostle propounds the greatest Reward imaginable, but in the other World, and that too upon supposal of Perseverance to the End, — *if so be that we faint not*: For they who persevere not to the End, are like those foolish Husbandmen, who, when they have plowed and sowed, proceed no farther, take no care to cover it from the Fowls, or from the nipping Frost, or scorplings of the Sun; they have thrown their Seed, and Time and Pains away to bad purpose; and so do they who begin in sowing to the Spirit, but faint before the Time of reaping come. In Hopes then of this glorious Harvest, *Let us, whilst we have opportunity, do good to all men, but especially to them who are of the household of faith*, to God's domestick Servants in especial Manner. In which Words we have these Things to consider.

- I. The Duty exhorted to, of doing good; *Let us do good.*
- II. The Extent of this Duty as to Persons, *to all men* in general, but especially to God's domestick Servants, *especially to the household of faith.*
- III. The Time of doing it, *whilst we have opportunity.*
- IV. and *Lastly.* The Reward we are to set continually before our Eyes, to the stirring us up to the doing good, implied in the Word *therefore*: He had said in the foregoing Verse, *We shall reap in due time*; and in the Text, *Therefore, whilst we have opportunity, let us do good to all men.*

Of these in their Order: And

*Ist,* Of the Duty exhorted to, *Let us do good.*

*To do good*, is a Phrase of a large and comprehensive Signification, and takes in the whole Duty of a christian Man, to which we are undoubtedly exhorted in the general; but in this Particular, *to do good*, signifies to *do acts of charity and beneficence*. And indeed it is hardly possible to do good with respect to one's Neighbour, but that good must be a Kind of Charity, a Relief or Succour to them in some particular or other, where they wanted it, or else it could not deserve the Name of *good*, which must have relation to some Evil or Inconveniency they would otherwise have suffered; and it has obtained by Custom, that *doing good*, and *being charitable*, are Phrases of the same Importance. And so it is frequently in the *New Testament*, *Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-Day?* saith our Saviour, when he was curing Diseases, *Mark* iii. 4. *Ye have the poor with you always; when you will, you may do them good*, *Mark* xiv. 7. *Charge the rich, that they do good*, *1 Tim.* vi. 18. *But to do good, and to communicate, forget not*, *Heb.* xiii. 16. And that doing good in this and in all Senses, indeed, is the general Duty of us all, is not only plain from Reason and Scripture, but acknowledged and confessed by all the World.

When a Man is the Object of this Charity and good himself, then he sees nothing so clear and evident, as that all Mankind are by Nature obliged, and urged by Reason, and compelled by Scripture, to shew that Charity, and do that good he finds he wants; and he thinks the Man injurious to him, that refuses him what he stands in need of, and the other could supply without his Detriment and Loss. And when the Scene changes, and he himself becomes the Party applied to, he does not plead that he is not obliged to relieve the distressed Suppliant, but makes Excuses of his Inabilities, and seems concerned that he wants the Power to answer to his Will. And whether Men's Excuses are good or bad, whether their Wants be true or pretended ones, is no great



Matter here; they serve alike to shew, that in Reason and Conscience all Men are, and hold themselves obliged to do all the good they can. So that there needs no proving the Reasonableness and Necessity of Mens complying with the Exhortation in the Text, *Let us do good.*

One might also, if there were Occasion, enforce this Matter farther, from the Consideration of the Pleasure, and the Profit too, that attends the Practice of doing good. There is nothing fills the Mind with more Content and Satisfaction, than acting agreeably to natural Light, and to the Rules of Reason: There is a secret Joy, moreover, springs up in the Heart, at helping of a Fellow-creature, in rescuing human Nature from the Wrongs and Mischiefs that it suffers in our Brother: There is an innocent and pleasing Kind of Pride in being superior to the Evils that afflict another; and it makes up a Triumph in the Mind, to free that other from them. There is nothing, in a word, that is more pleasing in Contrivance and Design, nothing more grateful and delightful in the acting, nothing that leaves a sweeter Odour after it, and raises more Complacency in the Mind, and glad Remembrances, than doing good. Neither is the Profit any whit inferior to the Pleasure, as might be shewn at large from several Heads, if it were necessary. I rather chuse to pass on to the Second thing to be considered;

## II. The Extent of this Duty of doing good, which is *to all men.*

The *Galatians* were in danger of *Judaizing* in their Practices as well as Doctrines, *i. e.* of loving none but themselves and Countrymen. The *Jews* were grown so famous for this churlish and uncharitable Temper, that the Heathens took great notice of it. They would not so much as direct a wandring Passenger into the right Way, nor shew a thirsty Traveller a Fountain where he might refresh his Thirst, unless he were a *Jew* or a Profelyte. And our Saviour seems to hint at this, when he tells them who their Neighbour was, *Luke x. 30.* where he discovers this ill-natured Practice, by the Priest's and Levite's passing by the Stranger, who were both of them *Jews*, and informs them, they must leave off those unneighbourly, ungenerous, and narrow Notions, and must do good to all Mankind, as it came in their way; and not imagine that the *Jews* alone were the Neighbours intended by God, when he commanded them *to love their neighbours as themselves.* And it is with this Prospect that St. Paul advises the *Galatians* *to do good unto all men*; not to suffer themselves to be led away by the Example of the close and narrow-hearted *Jews*; but to account that all that wanted their Assistance had a Right to it, by virtue of that *Title of Want*: That our Saviour had commanded them, not only to do good to those they loved and were beloved by, but to those that cursed, hated, and despitefully used them; *That they might be the children of their Father which is in heaven, who maketh the sun to rise upon the evil and good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.* Not that they should make no Difference and Distinction in their charitable Acts, but give promiscuously, and alike to all; for that cannot be the Meaning of the Place, which is contradicted in the next Words, *but especially to those of the household of faith*; but that no Nation, Party, or Religion, should exclude Men from their Charity, if their Wants had made them Objects of it: That all Mankind was fitted for their Love and Pity, and was to partake of it in Time and Place convenient, notwithstanding his Opinions in Religion, Difference of Nation, Practice, or Belief: That People's Wants made them Objects of Charity, and not their Agreement in Opinion, or their being of such a Party. And therefore he that would be charitable, must relieve the Wants of the Necessitous, whoever they were, as it came in his way. When therefore he exhorts us to do good to *all*, he only means that no one should be absolutely excluded and incapacitated from receiving Benefit, when his Condition calls for it, and ours will bear the doing it. He does not hereby  
make



make void the Difference and Distinction that the Laws of Nature, Nations, and Religion have already made, and such as are certain; nor such as by unfortunate Accidents, or unforeseen, or unavoidable Calamities, are become such. The Calls of Nature must and will be heard first, and no Laws can or will supersede them: And the positive Laws of God are to be heard next, and next to them the Laws of the Land; and after these are satisfied, Men are left to govern themselves by the Rules of Prudence and Discretion, by the Affections of their Minds, and the Examples of wise and good People. It would be tedious to recount the Particulars that are to be preferred in doing good; I will only give a word or two, to the Instance St. Paul uses here, *especially to those that are of the household of faith*, because some Men are not so well satisfied in this Particular, as in the rest. But the Reasonableness of this will appear, 1. From the Practice of all Times and Nations, conforming to each other, and agreeing in this, That the Priesthood was to be provided for apart, and that it was to be maintained in Honour and Esteem: Where-ever there has been People, there has been Religion, such as it was; where-ever there has been Religion, there have been Persons consecrated and set apart from secular Employments to attend its Service; and where-ever it has been so, there was a Maintenance provided for them at the publick Charge. 2dly. It was so by God's Appointment with the *Jews*. 3dly. It was so by Christ's Appointment under the Gospel, as appears from the Passage before cited by St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 14. *Even so hath the Lord ordained, That they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel.* And though St. Paul himself worked for his living in a secular Employment, and some perhaps at that Time with him; yet the Case was singular, and he chose to do so for particular Ends and Purposes he had, and argued strongly in behalf of others Provision, though he made no Use of it himself: And there has been no other Instance since his Time, of any Churchman that hath taken up a professed Employment or Trade to live by, with our great Scandal to the Church, and against its Rules and Canons. No People, till of late, ever thought it decent to remove from the Shop to the Pulpit: None from the Days of *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, till some Years ago, have dared to say with them, *Numb. xvi. 3. That all the congregation were holy, every one of them, and the Lord among them*, in the Sense of those deplorable Sufferers. 4thly, The Canons of the Church have not only forbid them taking up any Trade or Calling, but the Laws of the Land have made it highly penal for them so to do,\* even to the taking of a Farm to rent, which yet is one of the most innocent, and least scandalous Ways of living, amongst us. Lastly, Though this should be permitted them, yet the Way of Education that is absolutely necessary to the accomplishing and fitting People for the Ministry, does perfectly unqualify them for any other Employment; and the Time that is necessarily spent in the due discharging of that Office, will afford them but little Leisure to attend any other gainful one. These Reasons, whose Heads I have only mentioned, with a great many others that easily occur to any thinking Person, may be sufficient to shew the Reasonableness and Equity of St. Paul's remembring the *Galatians*, *That in their doing good to all men, they should have a more especial regard to such as are of the household of faith.*

But though the Apostle's Argument do necessarily require, that by the *Household of Faith*, be here especially meant the *Pastors of the Church, and them that teach*; yet those Terms do also comprehend the whole Christian Church, all the Body of Believers, as opposed to the prophane *Gentiles*, and to the unbelieving *Jews*; and then the Words are to be taken in this Sense; You are in Danger to be taught by the *Jews*, with whom I find you frequently converse, that all your Charity is to be tied to one Nation, and confined to People of the same Persuasion; but this is too narrow a Notion of the christian Charity, which is designed to enlarge Men's Hearts, and to extend their Love and

\* 21 Hen. VIII. cap. 13.



and Kindness over all the World; the Commands of Christ, and consequently his Apostles Exhortations are, that Christians should do good to *all men*; but that where a Preference can be made, without Offence to Charity, it be made in behalf of Christ's Servants; If there come a Competition betwixt a *Jew*, a *Gentile*, and a Christian, and the Merits and the Wants be equal, the Preference should be made in Favour of the Christian, in Honour of our Lord, and to the Encouragement of his Religion. And the same Reason there is, that in our Distributions among Christians, respect be had to those that are the best, that behave themselves more devoutly towards God, and carefully and honestly towards their Neighbours, where the Distress is equal, and the Necessities alike; for the better People are, the nearer Relation they have to God, and the higher Offices they bear, as it were, in God's Household, and consequently have a better Title to the Benefits exhorted to in the Text, *To them especially that are of the household of faith.*

*Thirdly*, Here is the Time expressed of doing this good, namely, *whilst we have opportunity.* Yet a little while is the light with you, walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth: While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light, saith our Saviour, John xii. 35. Give glory to the Lord your God, saith the Prophet, Jer. xiii. 16. before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. I must work (saith the Lord of Day and Night himself, John ix. 4.) the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work. There is a Light, and a Day, and a Time given us all, to work out our Salvation in, to do the Will of God, to perform his Commands, and to perfect the Business in, he sent us hither for. And behold (as St. Paul says, 2 Cor. vi. 2.) now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation. The Light and the Day is *this Life*, and the Place is *this World*, and it is now, and it is here, that we must walk in the Ways of God, and do the Works of his Commandments. Now while we live, is the Time of making Matters sure; now is the only Opportunity of doing good, which if once let slip, there is no more recovering it: For there is no wisdom in the grave, saith Solomon, Eccl. ix. 10. and he that goeth down thither, shall come up no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more, saith Job, vii. 9. Since then it is agreed upon all Hands, that it is all our Duties to do all the good we can, as we have Opportunity, and we have no Opportunity of doing it beyond this Life: Why is not doing good, the Consequence of these two Premises? How comes it that Men know the Necessity of doing it, and the Benefit of it when done, and the Time allotted them to do it in, and yet there is so little done? The Reason, I think, is this, that Men promise to themselves still better Opportunities than the present Time they think affords them: They put the Execution of their good Purposes off from day to day, and imagine that a more convenient Season will present itself; that to morrow and the next day may produce some new Matter, and change the Circumstances of things to their Advantage; and waver about in these Uncertainties, till Life itself, the great Opportunity, is unexpectedly cut off, and all their Thoughts perish: Whereas if they were as wise in this, as in other Matters, they would rather argue thus; I find I am obliged by Nature, Reason, and Religion, and (God be thanked) by my own Inclinations, to do all the good I can; and I know assuredly withal, that the Good to be done by me, is to be done in this Life, while it pleases God to continue me in this World; and because I cannot possibly tell how long I have to live, and what is like to be the Number of my Days, and that every Day produces some strange Instance of the Uncertainty of Life, and the Suddenness of Death, therefore I must put my Designs of doing good in Execution presently, for fear I should be prevented;



vented; my Desires and Resolutions may prove abortive, if I defer them any longer; therefore my *Purposes* shall be, as soon as possibly they can, *Performances*. Can any Premises be plainer? Can any Consequence be juster and more reasonable than this? I must do good whilst I have Opportunity, but I cannot tell how long this Opportunity may last, or when it will end: I am only sure of the present Time, that which I have in Possession is only mine; therefore if I will secure myself, I must do all the good I can immediately, and whilst the Time is in my hand; the Time to come is none of mine; I am not Master of the ensuing Year, nor can command the Month that's entering: If I bid the Morning hasten, or the Evening slacken its Pace, because that I intend to do some good, they neither hear nor mind me, but proceed according to Appointment, and each of them may find me cold and senseless, and incapable of either doing or receiving any farther good in this World. And therefore when St. *Paul* advises to do good whilst we have opportunity, he advises us to do it as soon as possibly we can, and that we lose no Opportunity by Delay: It may otherwise happen to us, as it did to the poor Man that promised himself such Ease and Pleasure in the Enjoyment of the Fruits and Riches he had treasur'd up; *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, and then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* We frame a great many fine Projects in our Heads, contrive abundance of good Designs, and intend to do the Lord knows how much Charity; but the Sentence passes out from God upon us, and cuts us off in the midst of all our Purposes, and what is then become of all our good Intentions? We are gone to a Place where great Account will be had of all the Good we actually have done, and would have done, if we had but Opportunity; but little or none at all will be had of that which vanished in Design, and went no farther than the Brain. But that may not be the worst in some Cases, where we shall give account for all the Abilities and Opportunities we had of doing good, but overslipped or quite neglected.

But *Secondly*, There is an Opportunity of the *Will*, as well as *Time*, which must be taken hold of; for though the Opportunity of Time may be continued to a Man, yet the Will and Inclination may be changed. The Will, we know, is very uncertain, and tacks about with every new Variety of Accidents; the Inclinations alter with and without Reason, as they see convenient; and he that promises to himself at this time, that six Months hence he will have the Mind and Inclination to do such and such things, understands his Temper but a little, and is but indifferently acquainted with the Inconstancy of human Nature, and the Deceitfulness of his own Heart. He may be sure enough indeed, that if he be then of the same Opinion he is now, that he shall do the Things he now resolves on; but, for ought he knows, his Mind may be then averse from the Purposes he now makes; and therefore if they are good, he had best fulfil them in their properest Season, which is *Now*, when Time and Inclination meet and are agreed. The Mind (I say) is humorous and fantastick, tossed up and down in great Uncertainty, and even the gravest, soberest, and most necessary Resolutions are oftentimes perverted by the most inconsiderable and trivial Accidents; and therefore we must strike in with the Inclinations presently, and not permit the Designs of doing good to cool and grow remiss.

Sometimes it happens that the Mind is warmed with some unusual supernatural Heat, and is ardently inflamed with the Desire of doing good, and it looks like an Impulse from Heaven; but if it be not presently complied with, it returns no more, but vanishes. Sometimes a Man returns from Church, and the Sacrament; and sometimes rises from his Prayers, or from reading or hearing an affectionate Discourse; sometimes is seized upon the sudden, with a Heart full fraught with godly Purposes, charged with good Intentions and excellent Resolves; he finds himself sensibly affected with what passed, sees the Reasonableness and the Necessity of changing his Course,



and doing all the good he can, whilst he continues in this World; but returning to his Business and Employment, entertaining his Friends and Guests, repeating the News, giving Orders to his Servants, resolving to prosecute one Affair to-morrow, and another the next day, and so on, the Designs of doing good begin to wear out of his Mind, and all those Thoughts perish; and if by accident they are again revived the next good Opportunity, they have still the same Fate to die abortive, for want of being presently complied with, and exerted into good Acts. So that he who intends to follow St. Paul's Advice, of doing good whilst he has Opportunity, must by all means resolve to attend to the Motions of his Heart, and to take himself, as it were, in the good Humour.

*Thirdly*, There is also an Opportunity of Power, to be complied withal, and without which the others signify but little; for Men may have both *Time* and *Will* to do good, that have not the Opportunity of *Power*. And indeed it is often seen, that when Men have Time and Power, they want the Will; and when they have Will and Time, they want the Power: If therefore they would be secure, they must do it when they are able. Not that any one shall be blamed or punished for not doing good, when he has no Power of doing it, but for omitting it, whilst he had the Power; for not doing it before he was disabled. And the Reasonableness of complying with the Exhortation in the Text, whilst we have Power, depends especially on the Uncertainty of human Affairs, and the Instability of all Conditions. If a Man will patronize the Innocent, protect the Weak, defend the Poor and Fatherless, and see that such as are in Need and Necessity have right; if he will correct the Dissolute, restrain the Oppressor, and prosecute the wicked and malicious Persecutors of the injured Poor, he must do it whilst he is a Judge and Magistrate, and has the Power and Opportunity in his Hands, for else his Pity comes too late, when his Power is gone: And his Love of Justice, and Designs of doing it, end in imperfect Wishes. And so it is in the Designs of Charity of all sorts; They must be brought to Effects, they must be accomplished while we have Abilities; for many are the Ways, and sudden are the Accidents, that disable Men from doing good. As every Element contributes to the enriching, so it does to the impoverishing of People; and every little thing that makes for, does also sometimes make against a Man; and it is hardly possible for an Accident that is exceeding favourable to one, but it must also have an ill Aspect on another, or that one Kingdom should flourish mightily without some others decaying. So that the Uncertainty of Men's continuing in a prosperous State, should be an Argument to hasten them on to doing good, whilst it continues, and not as it is commonly made, a Pretence for withholding Charity; Men make it an excuse for doing none at all. They see so many sad Accidents, so many Families reduced to beggary and want, so many Storms and Tempests on the Seas, so many Inundations and Fires at Land, that though they are at present enabled to do good, yet they cannot tell how long it will be so with them, and therefore they forbear. Whereas for this very Reason, they should do what good they could immediately. Their Estates, they say, are exposed to a great many sad Chances: Yes, they are; therefore, say I, secure some Part of them from all Chance; secure them in the Bowels of the Poor; secure them with the Blessing of God; put them into his Protection, and then they will be safe: Make him your Bondsmen, and he will be responsible. Had you rather trust the Seas with all you have, than God with a very little Part? Is it safer in a Board two Inches thick, within a Yard or two of the devouring Sea, and exposed to the Fury of a Storm, than under the Protection of the Almighty? Is it safer, think you, where it may become a Prey to Fire and Thieves, than where no Accidents or Men can reach it? But what if Peoples Fears should come to pass? What if all they had should indeed be consumed by Fire, or taken away by Villains? Would the Loss be greater, for having given away some Portion of it to the Poor?



Poor? Would it not rather comfort one, to think that some was saved, and saved so very well? But what lamentable Excuses must a Man be forced to make on these Accounts? I would do no good when I could, because I was afraid I might, by chance, be disabled from doing it. Why, what's the Difference betwixt chusing to be disabled, and being made unable by Accident? but that one is a *Fault*, and the other a *Misfortune*; and you chuse the Fault, and are fallen into the Misfortune? I would do no good when I could, because I was afraid; Of what? that I might come to want myself. Then put these things together: *I was afraid of relieving others wants, lest I should come to be relieved myself.* Well, but now you are become an Object of Charity by some of the Accidents you so much dreaded, and who shall help you? Who shall afford you that Relief that you denied to others, for very fear you should be forced to ask yourself? Do you not perceive that the Judgment of God hath overtaken you in this matter, and that you are caught in your own Snare; and that the very Fear of falling into Misery yourself, should have made you charitable to another, which yet you made the Reason why you were not so? I refused to do good, when I was able; but now I would, and cannot: this is the best that can be said by you. But how are you assured of this, that you would, if you could, do good? You remember the Time when you could, and would not; and you remember the Reason which hindered you, *i.e.* the Uncertainty of Men's Conditions, and the Instability of human Things; and since that Reason is not like to mend upon your hands, why should you think your Mind would not be the same again, in the same Condition? And therefore he that refuses to do good, because he is afraid of evil Times and sad Mischances, is a miserable Man, whether those Times and Chances overtake him or not. If they do not, he is a miserable Man, that does no good when he is able: and if they do overtake him, then he is miserable with a witness; first, in being deprived of what he loved so dearly; secondly, in the sad Remembrance, that whilst he had his Riches, they were useless to him, and he did no manner of good with them. Whereas, on the contrary, if the charitable Man, by God's Permission, fall into Misfortune; if he, that has in his Time been good to those that wanted, come by sad Mischance to want himself, he does not only find Mankind ready to pity and relieve him, but he has the greatest Ease and Satisfaction in the World about him, in his Mind: He remembers that whilst he was Possessor of his Wealth, he did what good with it he could, and that the Needy shared with him. He can rejoice with *Job* in his Affliction, *Job xxix. 12. Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him; the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.* It entitles him to the Hopes of receiving Benefit from others; it makes his State not half so troublesome, in freeing him from the Remembrance that would plague him, if he had neglected doing good whilst he had Opportunity: But now being well secured of that, he is able to say with Comfort, *Whilst I had it, I used it as I should; and now it is gone, no more will be expected; The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.* These are the Senses in which this Phrase, *Whilst we have opportunity*, is to be understood: We must do good, whilst we have Time; when we have Will, and whilst we are able: Before God cuts us off by Death, whilst our Inclinations are bent that way, and for fear we fall into Misfortune, and become unable.

IV, and *Lastly*, To the encouraging us to the doing all the good we can, we have the Reward we are to set continually before our Eyes, implied in the word *therefore*. *Let us not be weary of well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not:* Therefore, *whilst we have opportunity, let us do good to all men.* The Practice here exhorted to, is pleasant, profitable, and necessary: the Time we have to do it in is very short,  
the



the Will inconstant, and the Opportunities not many. It is a thing we like exceedingly whilst doing, and as well when done: We shall all of us wish one day, we had attended to this matter; and they that have done most, will wish they had done yet more; and they who have done little or none, will wish they had done nothing else. It is that which makes us think on the Time past with Ease and Comfort, and on the Life to come with Hope and Pleasure. The Day of Trouble, and the Day of Death, are the two proper Times to try the Use and Excellence of Things and Friendships in; and in both these Times there is nothing stands a Man in more and better stead, than the Remembrance of his charitable Acts. The Soul is then exceeding busy, and looking out continually for what may give it Ease and Quiet; and finding all external Succours fail, turns and descends into itself, and there revolves the Actions of the Life past, to find what has been done that it can fasten on, and can abide by: what it can feed upon at present with Content, and what afford a comfortable Prospect for the future. The Splendors of the Life past, the pompous gay Appearances the Man hath made, the mighty Friendships and Dependencies contracted, the honourable Visits given, and had; the great Entertainments, the numerous Train of Servants and Attendants, with all that goes along with, and that follows a magnificent luxurious Fortune, do then afford but little Satisfaction to the Mind upon Reflection: It rather wishes that those Things had never past: There is Fear at least, and some Suspicion, due to the menagery of that Life; it was a State of Danger, liable to the Disorders of Excess and Wantonness, and to a great deal of Folly and Vanity at the best; and if it escaped these Evils, yet it is gone, and a Man is never the better for all that is past. Even the necessary Provisions made for Children, Wife and Family, do but barely content the Mind at present, and free it from the Perplexity that would arise from the Thoughts of leaving those it loved, in Want: But the recollecting this, creates no new or extraordinary Complacency in the Mind: these are not the Things it cares to dwell on long, or feeds upon with Pleasure. But the Remembrance of its Acts of Charity is *that* it lives upon, *that* it perpetually rolls about, and *that* it turns to every Moment. The Tables that have been spread for the Poor, the Portions that have been sent out to the Hungry, the Drink that has relieved the miserable Thirsty, the Cloaths that have been made for, and bestowed upon the Naked; the Counsel, Visits, and the Helps that have supported those in Prison; these Things are fed on with Delight, these fill the Heart with Pleasure and Contentment, these cool the Ragings of the Fever, and support the Weakness of Consumptions, and abate the Pains of our acute Diseases, and make Men's Beds in all their Sickneses. So that there is no one thing besides, that is so much its own Reward in this Life, that begets a Man more Good-will, that makes more Friends, that creates a greater Esteem, that fits Men for the Assistance both of Strangers and the Neighbourhood, that stirs and provokes the Prayers of all that want, and all that see and hear of it, and pulls down Blessings from the Throne of Grace, than this kind, benign Disposition of doing good to the Poor; nothing that is so faithful an Assistant in the Days of Sorrow, and of Sicknes, and the Hour of Death, as the doing Acts of Charity, and the shewing mercy to the Needy. The very Pleasure and the Profit of doing good, are of themselves an Argument of mighty Force, to draw Men to the doing of it; but when we have the Promises of God, the Hopes of Heaven and everlasting Happiness, proposed for our Encouragement, what is there that can sway against these powerful Motives?

I have now done with the Text, and have shewed the Reasonableness and the Necessity, together with the Benefits of complying with its Exhortation. It remains that I set before you an Example too, and then conclude.

I am persuaded, Gentlemen, that the Memory of *this Lady*, upon whose Account we now meet, is much more dear and precious in your Mind; and that I do her  
greater



greater Honours, when I tell of her good Works of Charity that she hath done, than if I could, without those Works, recount abundance of her other Qualities and Titles. It would be, methinks, but a very poor thing for me to be able to tell you, that she was descended of great Ancestors, and married very honourably, and had a great many lovely Children, and kept a mighty sumptuous Table, made most magnificent Entertainments, and wore a world of fine Jewels, and went in the richest Habits of her Time, kept I don't know how many Coaches, and Liveries without Number. I am ignorant of all, and any of these Particulars; but were they all true, I should be nothing forward to recount them: I should think I dealt more kindly by her Memory, and better answered her Intentions in our meeting here, to say she left a *Shilling* to the Poor, nay but a *Penny* to relieve some hungry Creature. But greater was her Charity, and greater be her Praises. I am to read

*A (Long and Glorious) Catalogue of the charitable Gifts of the Lady Mary Ramsey, which are yearly paid by the Governors of Christ's Hospital, out of Means which she bestowed upon it, for these godly Uses.*

I shall not so much as ask of you the Patience of hearing it. It would affront your Goodness and Religion to mistrust it.

Thus it begins: l. s. d.

To the Master of Peter-House in Cambridge, towards the Maintenance	}	40	00	00
of Two Fellows and Four Scholars, yearly, _____	}			
Towards the Maintenance of Twelve Scholars, Six in Cambridge, and Six	}	40	00	00
in Oxford, yearly, _____	}			

These two Particulars may look perhaps to some, rather like Works of *Munificence* than *Charity*: If it were so, they are full as useful, and full as necessary as the other: But indeed they are Works of great Charity, greater than you can easily at the first perceive. There's many a very hopeful Man lost, for want of better Maintenance at the Universities; for want of Means to subsist there longer than their poor Allowances will let them; for want of Books, and other necessary Encouragements of Study; without which the Mind is cramped, and forced into a narrow and illiberal Way of thinking; and all that generous, sprightly Vigor of Soul, which might have formed and compassed noble Purposes, sinks into little trifling Aims of getting Food and Raiment, and just living. And had there been but more such Benefactors to those Places, like this Lady, I may venture to say, a great many Churches, at a Distance, would be better served; and many who are now Objects of Pity and Reproach, might have become the Ornaments and Honours of the Nation.

Towards the Maintenance of a Free Grammar-School at Halstead in Essex, besides Repairs, yearly, _____	}	20	00	00
Towards the Maintenance of a Free Writing-School in Christ's Hospital, yearly, _____	}	20	00	00

The Benefits of Education are too great to be quite forgotten here, and too well known to be insisted long upon. Nature brings forth the *Creature*, but Education makes the *Man*: We are born *reasonable*, but whether we shall reason *well* or *ill*, depends upon our bringing up, and upon that the whole Felicity of our Life. It is not to be expected, that whilst we are Children, we should love these advantageous Gifts, and praise their good Designers and Bestowers; but it would be very hard, ungrateful, and unkind,



34 *A Sermon preached at Christ-Church on St. Stephen's Day, 1690.*

kind, if when we are Men, and feel the Benefits, we should be backward to recount these Works with Praise and Honour.

l. s. d.

*Towards the Curing of maimed Soldiers in the Hospital of St. Bartholomew; yearly,* ————— } 10 00 00

This is truly, and most properly to be, with *Job, eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame.* What can be nobler? What more just? than that they who have hazarded their Lives and Limbs for the Safety and the Honour of their Country, and brought a mangled Body Home, the Ruins of a Man, should find some Place of Comfort to retire to, to assuage the smarting of their festering Wounds, and have Wine, or Oil, or Balm poured on them by some good *Samaritan*? She is this good *Samaritan*, that hath compassion on these stript and wounded Creatures; that brings them to this Inn, and here takes care of them. I say, with our Saviour, to you every one, *Go and do thou likewise.*

l. s. d.

*Towards the Relief of the poor Prisoners in Newgate, Ludgate, Woodstreet, and the Poultry Counters; yearly,* ————— } 10 00 00

Whatever People now-a-days may think of this Piece of Charity, as needless, or as ill bestowed, yet *when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, and shall sit upon his throne, and before him all nations shall be gathered;* then they shall change their Mind, but change it to no purpose. *Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me.* Prisoners, alas! have all these Needs, and in a very great Degree, and therefore are included certainly, but not included only, but particularly mentioned; *I was in prison, and ye came unto me:* Where by *coming*, must be meant coming to purpose, coming to cheer the afflicted, comfort the distressed, raise the disconsolate, by good Advice, and friendly Admonition; but certainly *coming to relieve them* in their several Necessities, as is plain from the Reason of the Thing it self, as also from the Duties and good Offices it is joined with. To those who think these Offices of visiting, and comforting, and helping Prisoners, ill bestowed, and Time ill spent, I leave the reading of the rest of that Chapter, *Mat. xxv.* from the 41<sup>st</sup> to the 46<sup>th</sup> verse; where they shall meet with that left-hand Sentence that at last will overtake them.

l. s. d.

*Towards the Releasing of poor Men and Women out of the several Prisons in London, and Borough of Southwark; yearly,* ————— } 30 00 00

This was a *Wife* as well as a good Lady; she knew this Gift was much more profitable to the Commonwealth, than the other, and therefore trebled it. When Men's Misfortunes have reduced them to that lamentable Place, it is great Charity to keep them there from perishing by Cold and Hunger; but it is greater far, to get them out again, both to the Publick, and Particulars. The King has lost a Subject, the Government a Hand, the Corporation, perhaps, an useful Member; but to be sure, the Family has lost the Means of its Subsistence; the Wife has lost her Head, and the Children a Parent and Provider; and *Five* or *Six*, perhaps, are blest in a *Release*, where *One* alone is profited by Alms in an *Imprisonment*. I will not doubt but she had also a regard in this, to the Prisoner's spiritual Concern, to the Benefit of his Soul also; for I fear the Nature and Condition of those Places of Confinement, were in her Days too like



like to what they are in ours; the little Images of Hell, not only in their Chains and Darknes, but in those dreadful Oaths and Execrations, those raging Blasphemies and Prophanations of all things sacred, with all the cursed Train of Lewdnesses and horrid Immoralities imaginable. O! it is a fearful Use they make of their Afflictions: There is many a Man, they say, goes in both just, and honest, and religious, but unfortunate, that comes out, or abides therein, after some time, a Fiend incarnate, a Devil in human Shape, prepared for every Sort of Villany; and therefore, even in this respect, it is a mighty Piece of Charity, to release a Prisoner *betimes*, to lead him out of that Temptation, and deliver him from that Evil.

	l.	s.	d.
<i>Towards the Maintenance of Ten poor aged Men, and Ten poor Widows,</i>			
<i>with their Apparel, yearly,</i>	60	00	00

When *Tabitha*, full of good Works and Almsdeeds which she did, was dead, and *Peter* was sent for to her, the Widows stood by him weeping, and shewing him the Coats that *Dorcas* made, whilst she was with them. These Widows were themselves the living Monuments of *Dorcas's* Charity, and thought the Coats and Garments she had made, and ordered to be made for them, and other Poor, the most prevailing Argument to move the Apostle to Compassion, and the most honourable Mention they could make of their deceased Mistress; and so indeed it was. It was necessary in those Days to magnify the Power of Christ in his Apostles, and to confirm the Truth of his Doctrines by Miracles, and therefore *Tabitha* must be raised from the Dead. We cannot raise this *Tabitha* from the Dead: We are not the Apostles Successors in Miracles and mighty Works, but only in the ordinary standing Ministration of the Word and Sacraments: But we can tell you, She shall live for ever; this is the Way to Heaven, and this the Gate of Righteousness, by which, through Faith in Christ, and by the Grace of God, she made her Passage to eternal Happiness, and God shall raise her up glorious and immortal, to live and reign with him for ever. Nor shall her Memory fail on Earth; you living Monuments, Succession of her Charity, shall raise her from the dead in all Mens Praises and Esteem, and you shall cause this righteous One to be had in everlasting Remembrance.

	l.	s.	d.
<i>Towards the Relief of the Parish of Christ-Church, yearly,</i>	02	10	00
<i>To the Poor of the Parish of St. Peter's Poor, yearly,</i>	04	00	00
<i>To the Poor of St. Mary Wolnoth's, yearly,</i>	03	00	00
<i>To the Poor of St. Andrew Underhaft, yearly,</i>	03	00	00

I hope some of you will think these are small Sums, and that the Necessities of the Poor require and call for greater: they do so, and when you have thanked and praised God for this Lady's Gifts, then add your own, and make up what is wanting.

	l.	s.	d.
<i>For two Sermons to be preached, yearly,</i>	02	00	00

It will not become me here to say much to this. I have already said something in explaining the Text, which it seems the deceased Lady both understood and practised.

	l.	s.	d.
<i>Paid more by the said Governors out of the Means by her given this Year,</i>			
<i>above</i>	80	00	00
<i>The total Sum paid yearly by the said Governors,</i>	324	10	00
			I have



I have now done with this good Catalogue: I wish it would have held, at this rate, an Hour longer. I have read it by Desire, and in Course, according to the Custom, on *this Day*, on which the Church celebrates the *Martyrdom* of Stephen, whose standing Office was the Ministration of Charity, and providing for the Poor. But, I hope, you do not come here to hear it only in Course and Custom. There is no body can think a Lady of such Goodness could be so vain, as to appoint two Sermons, purely to get a Crowd of People round, to tell the Charities, and sing the Praises of her. No, there was Charity designed by that, but it was Charity to those that should be Hearers. She was in hopes that her Example would excite some others to the same good Works, for Examples are of mighty Force; we see too much of it in bad ones, and surely the good may have *some* Influence. She was in hopes, that something might be said, by Chance, or by Design, that might awaken some to the Exercise of that good Grace, which all Men think so excellent and necessary, and all Men like so well in *others*. Do not then defeat such good and reasonable Hopes; but if what I have said shall nothing move you, yet let her great Example speak, and speak to purpose. Order the matter so, that this *last Gift* may be as well bestowed as any of the rest, according to her good Intentions, which cannot be, without your Imitation of her in some kind or other. Take home this Catalogue with you, and try to copy after it. You will hardly find a wiser. It will become your *Wills* and *Testaments* much better, than a great many *Items* that are there. You give your Souls in your *Imprimis*, generally, to a very good Place, but you take no care to provide good Works to help them thither: You bestow your Bodies very decently, commonly, but some of *these Particulars* would make them smell much sweeter, and send out a more fragrant Odour.

We could strew much sweeter, and much finer Flowers upon the Dead, if their Wills were better filled than commonly they are; if they would take some care, to have something of Religion in them more than bare Words. How can the Rich and Wealthy of this World, begin their Testaments so solemnly, *In the name of God*, and never think upon him afterwards? How can a Christian Man bestow a hundred thousand Pounds upon his Son, upon his Nephew, or the Lord knows who, and little or nothing on the Poor? The *Wife* must be left with a mighty Jointure, all her Jewels, Plate, and Abundance of ready Money, by which she learns to forget him sooner, and becomes the easier Prey. The *Daughter* must have a prodigious Fortune, that she may fall into the Hands of lustful Villains, and make it worth their while to venture upon Violence, and Death; or else be married purely for her Money, and be for ever miserable. The *Son* must have wherewithal to reproach his Father's Meanness and Frugality, and make him ashamed to own his Lineage and Descent; but enough be sure, to spoil his Care and Industry, and enough too frequently to make him die a Beggar. And if these are wanting, the *Nephew* must have all, that the *Parent* (no, the *Uncle*) may not be said to have taken all those Pains, and made himself a Slave, and miserable, for nothing, without an Heir to leave it to. For what a lamentable Thing would that be to the poor Man's Ashes, if it should not be said by the Neighbourhood, that such a one left his Nephew *forty, fifty, or a hundred thousand* Pounds, although he neither wanted nor deserved it; but *nothing* to the *Poor*, though they did both? There must be Families, I know, and must be Distinctions, and there must be Provision made for all these Particulars; but the Poor must not be so forgotten as they are; they must come in for a Share, or all the rest will want its Blessing. And do not you think it is much safer, and much better, to secure the main, by bestowing a little well? Believe it, Gentlemen, you are not so much Masters, and absolute Lords of your Estates and Wealth, as Stewards of God's Household: *Now Stewards must be found faithful*, as *St. Paul* says, and must dispense these Goods according to their Master's Will, which he hath oft expressed, shall be, in Part, among his poor and needy Servants; and then I leave the Application to your selves. Remem-



Remember (to conclude) that our doing Acts of Charity, is necessary; remember that the Time of doing them is short, but the Reward of them when done eternal. We cannot sow long, but we shall reap the Fruits of it for ever; we cannot always do good Acts of Charity, but we shall always be receiving everlasting Recompences. For the bestowing of a little fading Riches here, we shall lay up Riches in Abundance for the Time to come; we shall exchange the Treasures that are here subject to a thousand Chances, for those in Heaven, secure in God's Hand; for the Want of a little Convenience, or some Superfluities of Life, we shall be satisfied with more than we can ask or think of. I will end all with the Charge of St. Paul to Timothy, 1 Ep. vi. 17.—and in Timothy to me, and all the Ministers of God's Word,—*Charge them*—and in Obedience to that Saint's Command, 1 Cor. iv. 2.—*I do charge them that are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute, laying up in store for themselves (sure you like that) a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life.* Which God of his Infinite Mercy bring us all to, for Christ's Sake, who for our Sakes became poor, that we through him might be made rich. To whom, &c.



A  
S E R M O N

Preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at St. *Mary-le-Bow*, on *Friday* the 11th of *April*, 1692. being the Fast-Day.

2 S A M. x. 12.

*Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: And the Lord do that which seemeth him good.*

**W**HEN *Joab* had set his Army in Array against the *Syrians*, and had given his Orders to *Abishai* to do the like, with those under his Command, against the *Ammonites*, and mutually engaged the Assistance of each other on Occasion, in the 11th Verse; he prepares both himself, his Brother, and the Army for the Fight, with this short Speech in the Text, *Be of good courage, &c.* In which Words we have these three Things to consider: *First*, The Exhortation of the General, *Be of good courage, and let us play the men.* *Secondly*, The Occasion and Necessity there was of doing so; the Concern they had at Stake was very great; it was, *For their people, and for the cities of their God.* *Thirdly*, The Resignation and Submission of the Issue and Event to God's good Pleasure and Disposal; *And the Lord do that which seemeth him good.* Of these I intend to speak in the first place; and in the second, make what Application may be proper. And,

*First*, Of the Exhortation; *Be of good courage, and let us play the men.* The Safety and Success of an Army does, in great measure, depend upon the Concord and Agreement of Commanders, and the good Understanding there is betwixt them; and *Joab* prudently considering this, lest the unequal Division of the Bands should offend *Abishai*, [for whether the *Syrians* were indeed the better Soldiers, and more formidable Enemies; or whether the *Ammonites* were supposed by *Joab* to be weakened by their Guilt, (as a *Jew* might well surmise) being the Authors and Occasion of this War, by having villainously treated *David's* Ambassadors; and therefore, that the weakest Men of *Israel* would be a Match for them; or whatever was the Occasion of *Joab's* taking all the chosen Men to serve under him,] he makes his Agreement before-hand with him, to come and succour him, if he should find himself distressed, and requires the like of him again. But because the People bear too great a Share, either in Rout or Victory, to be overlooked, he does, as wise and valiant Captains always used to do, address himself to the Army likewise, in the usual Words of Exhortation, *Be of good courage, and let us play the men.* *Be of good courage*, said *Moses*, to the Men he sent out to explore the Land of *Canaan*, Numb. xiii. 20. *Be strong and of a good courage*, said the same *Moses* both to *Joshua* and the *Israelites*, when he was about to leave them to encounter with their Enemies, Deut. xxxi. 6, 7. *Be strong and very courageous; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed*, said God himself to *Joshua* entering upon his Command, Josh. i. 6, 7, 9. *Be strong and of good courage*, said this *Joshua* too, to the *Israelites*,



*Israelites*, x. 25. And so said *David* to his Son *Solomon*, 1 Chron. xxii. 13. Chap. xxviii. 20. And so said *Ezra* to the *Jews*, x. 4. Which does not only shew, that no Attempt of any Moment or Importance, of our own Contrivance or Design, can be hopefully undertaken by us, without the exerting thus our Strength and Courage to the utmost; but that it is also necessary so to do, even in Enterprizes begun by God's special Order and Command, and where the Undertakers were his peculiar Favourites, as is observable in all the above-mentioned Instances. There is nothing so sure, as that where the Heart is faint, the Hands are feeble and hang down; the one does strangely influence the other: Men are commonly strong or weak, according to their Courage, not their Nerves and Sinews; they are almost whatever they desire to be; and Power dwells near the Will, as well as near Necessity. Some by this Heart and Courage have atchieved such great and marvellous Things, as few but they who are alike inspired, and heated with their Fire, can easily fancy or believe, more than indeed themselves could at first propose; or in their sober, cautious, reasoning Mood could hope for. Others, for want of this, have lost their lucky Opportunities, and blasted many a fair and hopeful Enterprize, when every thing, besides themselves, conspired to crown them with Success and Honour. Many, whose Hearts have robbed their Heads of their triumphant Wreaths, and loaden both themselves, and (which is more to be lamented) others, both with Chains and Infamy, that with a little of this generous Warmth, a little shaking off their Fear and Sluggishness, were fitted to be Conquerors, and happy. And therefore, there is great Necessity in all Attempts of Weight, of raising up the Heart, and calling all the vigorous active Spirits up to our Assistance; and not of this alone, but of provoking others with our Exhortations and Incitements, to be of good courage also. There is a noble Emulation in the Souls of most, which oft lies dormant for a while, until it be awakened by Example, or Upbraiding, or Encouragement; till either Praise or Shame discover what they can, as well as what they should do. And this is most remarkable in War; where many times a quick Oration, or a brave Example of some one or few Particulars, has given such Life and Strength to the whole Army, that from a fearful and inglorious Flight, they have returned to Victory and Spoil, and bravely have defaced and crost the Footsteps of their Shame: And on the other hand, some have been quite intimidated into Rout and great Disorder, by the Despondency of some great Officers, and cowardous Example of their Fellows, whose Fear did perfectly infect their Neighbours. So that in all Attempts of Moment, it is not only necessary to quicken and animate ourselves, and raise our Hearts as high as can be; but to give Life and Soul to others also, and to take what Care and Pains we can, that they, as well as we, may be of good courage. The other Part of the Exhortation is, *Let us play the men*; which is but the same thing expressed in other Words. *Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, and fight*, said the *Philistines* to each other, 1 Sam. iv. 9. *Be strong therefore, and shew thyself a man*, said *David* dying, to his Son, 1 Kings ii. 2. And so saith *St. Paul* in the Case of spiritual Warfare, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. *Quit yourselves like men, and be strong*; using the very Words by which the LXX. have translated the Exhortation in the Text, *ἀνδρίζεσθε ὡς ἡγήτας*. And where this History is again repeated, in 1 Chron. xix. 18. it is—*Let us behave ourselves valiantly*, instead of, *Let us play the men*; the one importing and supposing the other. And this the Heathens understood of old, when they began their Exhortations to the Fight with *Ἄνδρες ἵστασθαι*, and *Fite Viri*, &c. Do but remember you are Men, and act accordingly; imagining that they who would but think upon themselves, would never do a Thing unworthy of their Nature, and the noble Name by which they were called. They looked upon the Name of *Man* as a Preservative and powerful Charm against both Treachery and Cowardise; a perfect Contradiction to whatever is esteemed vile and infamous, and comprehending every thing that is great, and brave, and honourable.

But



But lest the Consideration of the Excellence and Dignity of human Nature should not of itself balance the Love of Life and Fear of Death, the general and prevailing Passions of Men's Hearts; there are also added, in the *Second Place*, The Motives and Incitements to the shewing forth this Courage, some Reasons and Inducements why they ought to quit themselves like Men; it was not for themselves alone they were to fight, but *for their people, and the cities of their God*. By *People*, we are to understand all that were left behind at home, all the Relations and Dependants that they had, their Fathers, Mothers, Wives and Children, Friends and Servants; and all the Civil and Judicial Laws, the Ties and Bonds that make a People, and distinguish them each from the other; for all these are implied in the Word *People*; and when Men fight for *their People*, they virtually fight for all these, because that these are all in Danger to be lost by being conquered. And by the *Cities of God*, we are to understand not only their particular Cities, but all the Villages and Country, and all their Estates and Habitations, all their Subsistence, and their Livelihood; because whoever masters the *Cities* of a Country, is presumed to be Master of all besides; the one does naturally take in all the other; it must be so in Reason, and we see it is so by Experience. But because these *Cities* are also *Cities of God*, we may very well imagine their *Religion* also is included in those Terms: For whatever Grace and Favour God is said, in many Passages of Scripture, to shew to *Israel*, and *Jerusalem*, and *Sion*, to love her Buildings and her Towers, and to take delight in her Palaces, with the like, we may be sure it is for the Sake of his Laws and Worship therein: *In Jewry is God known, and his name is great in Israel; at Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling in Sion*. And this is the Foundation of his Love. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and ordinances unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with any nation, neither have the heathen knowledge of his laws*. Psalm cxlvii. 19. Here was the Habitation of his House, and the Place where his Honour dwelt; and it was on this Account that it was called the *Holy City*, and the *Holy Place*: and it is in this respect (making Allowance for a greater Holiness and greater Favours) that the Church of Christ is called, *The City of the Lord*, Isa. lx. 14. *Mount Zion, and the City of our God*, in Heb. xii. 22. And the same in *Revelations* is said of Heaven itself, iii. 12. So that by *Cities of God*, we are not to understand only the Walls and Houses, but the Worship and Religion of those Places. And then, *To be of good courage, and play the men for their People, and for the cities of their God*, is neither more nor less, than to fight and do valiantly for their *Lives*, and *Laws*, and *Fortunes*, and *Religion*; the same which the Ancients called fighting *pro Aris & Focis*. This Place would give me Opportunity of saying something in Defence of *War* in general, and in the Justification of each of these particular Occasions; but the Consideration of these Matters at large would lead me too far, and hold me too long; it may be more convenient to take the Matter, as it is in the Text, for granted, as *Joab* did undoubtedly, concluding the Defence of his Country and Religion a very justifiable Ground of War; especially if we remember withal, that this *their behaving themselves valiantly for their people, and for the cities of their God*, was notwithstanding, an offensive War on *Israel's* Side, invading *Ammon* for their vile, unmanly Usage of the King's Ambassadors. And if such insolent injurious Dealing with Ambassadors be (as it always was accounted by the World in general) a just Occasion for a War offensive, we may conclude safely enough, That the Defence of *Lives*, and *Laws*, and *Fortunes*, and *Religion*, are each of them sufficient Warrant for the drawing of the Sword. And though in private Cases, the Principles of Christianity are very peaceable and tender, and regardful of Men's Welfare in this World as well as the other, and lay greater Restraint on Peoples Inclinations to Contention and Disturbance than any other Laws whatever, and would, perhaps, if heedfully attended and obeyed, prevent most Wars; yet where Men will not hearken to good Reason, nor the Christian Doctrines, where there is no Redress of Injuries to be



be expected from the Laws (as in national Affronts and Wrongs there cannot be) where the contending Parties will admit of no Arbitrator betwixt them, whose Sentence shall be decisive, and from whom there shall be no Appeal; there certainly the Sword of War becomes necessary, there Christ hath left the Publick to consult its Welfare and Defence, and to pursue its Peace and Safety by such Methods as are proper, just, and honourable. He hath left no Rule in these Extremities for the Publick to govern itself by, but neither hath he barred it such Defence as the common Reason of Mankind suggests in all such Cases. He hath not indeed *commanded* War; but neither hath he *so forbidden* it, as that it should not be both just and lawful, when it is absolutely necessary. And absolutely necessary to be sure it is, when either Lives, or Laws, or Fortunes, or Religion, are at Stake, and cannot otherwise be well preserved. What End and Purpose of Religion can be served, by letting fifty, sixty, or an hundred thousand People be killed, for the enlarging such a one's Dominion, or for the enriching so many Plunderers with the Booty? What Tendency has such a Slaughter to the promoting of either Piety or Virtue? And therefore to think that Christianity commands such Patience, Sufferance, or such Cowardise as this, is to think it not only a very weak Religion, but a Religion countenancing and encouraging Oppression, Insolence, and Violence, and Cruelty, and Blood; for this would naturally happen, thro' the Infidelity of such as are not Christians, and the Malice and Perverseness of such as are very bad ones. What Use would such a People as the *Tartars* are, make of such a Doctrine, as the Unlawfulness of War among the Christians? One might justly say, that such a Doctrine would be the Occasion and Cause of all the Ravages and barbarous Devastations, of all the Rapes and Murthers such a People would commit. And to say that Christianity encourages to so much Evil, is to give it an abominable Character; and yet they say as much, who say that War is absolutely forbidden to Christians; for were it so indeed, both Infidels and wicked Christians would commit a thousand greater Evils than they daily do; and how far Christianity would be chargeable with them, by such a natural Provocation and Encouragement, as the disarming Christians were, is not hard to determine. It is but a poor Defence to say, I did not kill *Caius*, nor provoke *Sempronius* to his Murther; but only took away his Sword and Weapons of Defence, and left him to the Fury of his Adversary, who only watched for such an Opportunity. The Case of private People's suffering Injuries without Retaliation, is much another Thing than this of publick War; though even in that, the Redress of Law is by no means absolutely forbidden; and the Permission of Redress by Law for private Injuries, is not so different from Permission of Redress by War for publick Wrongs, as People commonly imagine: the Reasons differ not in *Kind*, but in *Degree*. And if Martyrdom itself, *i. e.* the suffering Death for the Sake of Christ and of the Gospel, be not so commanded, but that it *may* and *is* to be avoided, where the Honour of God and of the Christian Name can be secured without it; we may be sure, the suffering Death, and other Evils, where neither God's Honour, nor the Truth of the Gospel, nor any End of Christianity is served, is not commanded us, and consequently that War is not forbidden by the Christian Law. But leaving these Disputes, and taking it for granted, that every one of these Occasions of War is just and lawful; the Text supposes that they are every one of them good Motives and Encouragements to Men to behave themselves valiantly in the Fight; *Let us be of good courage, and let us play the men, for our people, and for the cities of our God*; which, as I tried to shew, implied our Lives and Laws, our Estates and our Religion.

That People's *Lives* are worth contending for, need not be proved, for every one's own is almost worth a War to *him*; but when the Lives of all his Civil and his Natural Relations too are equally concerned, then not to venture bravely for them, is to prove-



prove his Life indeed was hardly worth the Living; a Life that well deserved to be cast away. And what can be said of Men who in such Extremities will tamely yield, but that they act at once the Fool and Madman, and die indeed for Fear of Death? There is little Hope, that the Preservation of the Laws and Liberties of a Nation should prevail with those, whom the Consideration of their own, and others Lives, cannot incite to Courage, and incline to behave themselves like Men; but however, this has all along been esteemed, of all brave People, a Consideration of the last Importance; and they have freely ventured the one in behalf of the other, accounting Life itself a Burthen, when they lost the other. There is something in the Frame and Constitution of each Government, so fitted and peculiar to the Genius and the Tempers of a People, that it is not to be altered by violent Conspirators at home, nor by a foreign Enemy, without the greatest Inconveniencies, and the most fearful Consequences possible; and the Laws of each particular Nation consulting most especially the Benefit and Welfare of their own Subjects, it is no wonder if they are tenacious of this Kind of Government, and of these Laws, and find it worth their while to resist unto Blood in their Defence and Maintenance. It is the Properness and the Fitness of these Laws to the Country and the Subject, that gives each People the Happiness they have; and since it is impossible for a Nation to be absolutely conquered, without breaking the Laws and Constitutions of its Government, and bringing others in, more beneficial to the Conqueror and his Country, and consequently prejudicial to the conquered, there is nothing in this World that better deserves to be defended to the utmost of Men's Power, than the Continuance of their Laws and Government: And this the rather, because the overturning of the Laws, does also overthrow Men's Fortunes and Estates, without which Men would live but hardly and uncomfortably; and that is the least, and one of the most gentle Effects of being conquered by a ravaging and greedy Enemy; the being reduced to Misery, and the greatest Evils of Want and Slavery, is an inseparable Companion of being overcome; the Hope of Prey and Spoil is the Life and Soul of an Army, and the Fear of it should also prove as strong a Spur to Valour, to defend one's self against it. That Religion (*Lastly*) suffers constantly in War, is very certain, and as certain that the Preservation of it, in its Purity and Truth, is as worthy an Employment of Men's Strength and Courage, as any other Cause whatever. *Cum loca capta sunt ab hostibus, omnia desinunt esse sacra*, was a Maxim of old. When once a Place is taken by the Enemy, there is no farther Difference made betwixt Things sacred and prophane. *Wars and Victories* (saith *Tertullian*, *Apol. c. 25.*) *are made up of Cities taken and overthrown, which cannot be without offending the Gods; the military Fury at the same time indifferently assaulting the City Walls and Temples; Slaughters involving Priests and Citizens, without Distinction; and the Soldier, greedy of his Prey, no more regards Things sacred than prophane: So many Conquests, so many Sacrileges; so many Triumphs over Nations, so many Triumphs too over the Gods.* And this was looked upon so certain, that the *Greeks* esteemed it as a Law and Rule, That whoever conquered the Country, conquered the Religion of it also; and they did accordingly surrender both together: And upon this account it was, that all the ancient Generals, in their Speeches to their Armies, constantly reminded them of their *Religion, Gods, and Altars*, left at home, as well as *Wives and Children*, which were sure to be the Prey and Plunder of their Conquerors; and thought at the same time, that if the Love and Fear, and the Regard they had to *them*, would not excite their utmost Courage, nothing else could do it. Whether it be lawful to carry War into another Country for the Vindication of God's Honour, which we think is injured and affronted by the barbarous or ridiculous Worship of that Country, and for the Propagation of the true Religion, is what may bear some short Dispute, perhaps; but the Conclusion will in all likelihood be, That it is not lawful, since



since God is his own best Avenger, and can vindicate his Honour, and promote his Truth, in Times, and Ways, and Methods, as he sees convenient, without the Help of Man; which he, in such Cases, requires not. But whether it be lawful to carry War into another Country, for the Defence and Preservation of the true Religion, which is otherwise in Danger and great Likelihood of being ruined and destroyed at home, will bear no manner of Dispute; because if it be lawful to be defended at home, (as all Men must allow) it will be also just to be defended abroad; for the carrying the War into another Country, is only to avoid those Evils we must otherwise necessarily endure, if we should suffer our Enemies to bring the War home to us: And this makes no Alteration of the Justice of the War at all; for the Cause of that is still the same, whether we fight abroad, or defend our selves at home; and Men chuse the one or the other, according to their Strength, and the Situation of their Country, and for a great many other natural or accidental Reasons. But whether it be lawful to carry War into another's Country, even an invasive War, in the Defence not only of the true Religion, but of the Professors of that true Religion, though another's Subjects, has born Dispute a great while. The Example of *Constantine* the Great's invading of *Licinius* for the Christians Sake, the Subjects of *Licinius*, might (with the Approbation of the Christians at that Time) serve in some Measure, one would think, to determine this Matter in behalf of the Lawfulness of so doing. *Constantine* and *Licinius* had shared the Empire betwixt them, and were consequently independent each of them upon his Fellow; each was *Augustus*, and each of them had made his Son *Cæsar*; and the Subjects of these Princes owed no Manner of Obedience, but to each their Master. The Emperors had each of them decreed at *Milan*,\* That the Christian Religion should be tolerated through the Empire; but *Licinius* afterwards suffering himself to be persuaded otherwise, betook himself, by all the Arts and Methods he was Master of, to break this Edict; and fearing the Zeal and Power of *Constantine*, was forced to practise secretly and cunningly at first the Overthrow of Christianity; not appearing in the Thing himself, but acting by his Presidents and Governors, who made their Court to him by such Compliance with his cruel Purposes, well knowing they could recommend themselves no Way so effectually, as by fulfilling his *Desires*, without expecting his *Commands*: But in a little time, this Modesty or Fear was overcome, (such zealous Superstition is impatient of Restraint) and he began to open his Designs with falling first upon the *Bishops*, (all Persecutions ever did the same; the very Heathens knew, as well as did the Christians, that the Church of Christ could never be undone without *their* Ruin; and therefore took the readiest Way, by falling upon *them* at first;) next he dismissed the Christians from all Employments at *Court*, cashiered them from the *Army*, and turned them out of *every* Office; then seized on their *Estates*, and fell at last upon the *Clergy*, killing some Bishops for praying for *Constantine*. Thus he continued persecuting for some good Time, designing nothing less than the utter Subversion of Christianity; which *Eusebius* † (who lived at the same Time) says, He had undoubtedly effected, had not God, the Protector of his People, prevented it, by raising up his Servant *Constantine*, and leading him as it were by the Hand to their Deliverance; who, after having exercised more Patience than was necessary with this brutal Prince, and all to no purpose, made ready at last to succour these distressed Sufferers, concluding it a holy and religious Thing to remove one Man, and save thereby a Multitude of People. In truth, *Eusebius* tells this Story in such Manner, that one might reasonably think, the Christians of *Licinius's* Empire sent to *Constantine* for some Relief; and there are some Phrases that would incline one to guess so: But there is no Occasion of going any farther than we are sure; and that

\* Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. x. cap. 5.

† Eccl. Hist. cap. 8, 9. & de Vit. Const. lib. II. cap. 2, &c.



that is, That *Constantine* did certainly make the Sufferings of the Christians one of his Pretexes of War at this Time; and that the Expedition was so well liked, that many \* Clergymen attended him as Chaplains; and he thought, if ever he had need of Prayers, it was now, and took them accordingly with him very gladly. And, lastly, That the whole Church, as well the *Western* as the *Eastern* one, rejoiced exceedingly at the Deliverance God was pleased to work by him, and expressed it in all the Demonstrations possible of Love, and Gratitude, and Honour; and with one Accord submitted to him, as the great and glorious Instrument of God's Mercy and Goodness towards them, and filled the World with his Commendations: And of this mutual Satisfaction in each other, the great and many endearing Kindnesses and Compliments that passed between the Emperor and the Council of *Nice*, are so many ample Testimonies, though they were most of them *Licinius's* Subjects, and the Council was called but a Year after his Defeat, 325. This Approbation of the ancient Christians of this Act of *Constantine*, might serve, I say, to shew that they esteemed it not only just and lawful, but honourable and religious, to carry War into another's Country for the Defence of the true Religion, and the Preservation of the Lives and Liberties of its Professors, which had been otherwise in danger of being quite lost: For the Victor neither made Pretence of propagating the true Religion, nor forcing People to forsake the false one by the Sword; but only of securing and defending them who were before Christians. And the whole Conduct of our Queen *Elizabeth*, (one of the best and happiest Princes that we ever had, and one who loved and best consulted both the Honour and the Welfare of our Nation) her whole Conduct, I say, with respect to all the Protestants abroad, approved of and rewarded both by Parliaments and Convocations, might make this Case a little more defensible, than it is commonly held to be by a great many People. These Princes (and a great many others) did not only think themselves obliged *to be of good courage, and behave themselves valiantly, for their own people, and for the cities of their God at home*; but made the *Cities of God* extend to all Places where the same God was worshipped in the like Purity, Simplicity and Truth. They went indeed farther than *Joab* here did, because he had no Occasion to go farther; but his Principles would have carried him to the Defence of *the Cities of God*, if they had been either in *Ammon's* or in *Syria's* Territories; and we need not question, but he would have made the Rescue and Deliverance of their persecuted Brethren, a quickning Motive and Encouragement to the behaving themselves valiantly, and quitting themselves like Men.

The last Thing we have to consider in *Joab's* Conduct, is, his Resignation and Submission of the Issue and Event to God's good Pleasure and Disposal; *and the Lord do that which seemeth him good*. He had made what Preparations he could, or thought convenient to his Purpose; he had gathered a great Army, and selected all or most of the chosen Men to oppose to the *Syrians*, and committed the rest to *Abisai's* Management, to order as he saw Necessity against the *Ammonites*; and had agreed to do what was fit in case of each other's Exigence, and he had made his final Speech to all of them; and done, in a word, all that a wise and valiant General had to do, and then commits the Event to God. It is in vain to think of doing any thing well without God; but it is as vain to think that God will do any thing without us, that lies in our Power to do. God is, in all our Wants, our Help and Succour; but not unless we will co-operate with him, and join our Forces to those which he affords us: He is indeed the best Ally that can be; but he will never fight our Battels by himself, whilst we stand idle by, and unconcerned: He is indeed the Author and Bestower of every good and perfect Gift; but he bestows them all upon our Industry and Vigilance; he makes his Blessings still the Recompences of our Care and Labour; he gives

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\* Valesius calls them *Bishops*.



Success, and Wealth, and Honour, and Wisdom; but he gives them to us by our selves, and gives them to our Diligence and Industry, to Labour and much Study; he gives us Virtues, but it is by Pains and Habits; he gives us many Graces, but it is by frequent Exercises and good Uses of them; it is in vain to ask him any thing we can bestow upon ourselves; for that is the Way he has already taken to bestow it on us; it is but mocking God, to beg of him what we think not worth our while or labour to obtain. *By Vigilance, Activity, and looking wisely after Things, they all go well; but when you give yourself to Sloth, and Laziness, and Cowardise, you shall in vain implore the Assistance of the Gods; for they are angry and incensed with such,* said a Heathen \* of old of his fictitious Deities; and we may say as much of ours, the true and only everlasting God: For although we are commanded to pray to God for our daily Bread, yet we must work for it, if we will have it; and St. Paul concludes we shall make ourselves unworthy of it, if we will not. We must indeed cast all our Care on God, and trust to his good Providence, and be over-anxious for nothing at all; but we must not so trust him, as to tempt him, by neglecting the Means which he hath put within our Power; we must do what we can for ourselves in every Case, and pray to God to bless and prosper our Endeavours, to make those Means effectual to the attaining of their End, and to supply, by his abundant Goodness, what is wanting: And when we have done all we can, all that is fit for us to do, we must resign up all to God, and try to be contented with the Issue he shall give to our Attempts, let it be what it will; and say with *Joab, The Lord do that which seemeth him good.* By this we acknowledge both his Being and his Providence; by this we own him for the supreme Governor and Arbiter of all Affairs; that he both overlooks and over-rules them all; that we put no Trust or Confidence in our Strength or Skill alone, without his Blessing; that all our Cunning and Abilities are but his Instruments, and the Means by which he brings to pass his glorious Purposes; that the Preparations we make, are neither made in Ostentation of our Strength and Excellence, nor in Doubt or Distrust of his Almighty Power, nor in Defiance of it, to be sure; but that we do therein, as reasonable Creatures ought to do, make such Provision, as that Reason says we should, and such as is proportioned out to our Abilities and our Necessities; but know withal, that they will signify nothing without his Pleasure and Permission; that all our Expectations and Desires are, That these our reasonable and natural Means may attain the End for which they are provided; but still with this Supposal, that it is agreeable to him; still it must be, *As it seemeth good to him.* But this is not all; we do not only by this Resignation and Submission own him for the Master and Disposer of all Events, but we prepare ourselves thereby against them; let the Issue be what it will, we are thereby fitted for it: If it be prosperous, and as we wish it, we know it is, nevertheless, an Effect of God's Kindness towards us, although we were ourselves the Instruments of working it; and we have then this Satisfaction, that God co-operates with our Designs, and blesses our Endeavours. They who have perfect Confidence in God's Goodness, and are perfectly resigned themselves to his Disposal, have every Blessing doubled that befalls them; they have all the Happiness that the Blessing of itself can naturally afford, to be sure; but then the Thoughts of having it from God, of considering it as an Effect of his peculiar Favour and Benignity, that it is the Disposal of unerring Wisdom; these Thoughts advance the Blessing to a mighty Height, and make it dear and valuable indeed: If it be cross, and other than we wished and hoped for, yet this Resignation to the Will of God makes it go down a great deal better; it puts us upon thinking it was neither necessary nor convenient for us, since it was denied by him, who gives to those who trust entirely to him, not only

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more, but better Things than they can ask or think themselves; or else it drives us to consider with ourselves what we have done that called for and deserved such Punishment, and consequently gains the End of every one of God's Inflictions, namely, Self-examination and Amendment; it never drives us from, but towards God; and makes us see his Mercy in his Justice, his Goodness in our Punishments. But (abstracting the Consideration of our Sins being the Cause of our Miscarriages, as they are not always so) when we know we have done all that we should and could do; and after that, have given up the Event to God, let it be what it will; we have this Satisfaction, That neither our own Hearts, nor other People, can reproach us justly with Neglect or Cowardise. When we have done our utmost, and performed what lay in *us*, the Disappointment leaves no Sting or Torment in the Mind; it is not vexatious to reflect on our Miscarriages, that happened through no Fault of ours, but were invisible, and not to be prevented; the Trouble is, where we look back, and see our Folly, or our Wickedness, the Causes of our Sufferings: That Recollection is uneasy and intolerable, and fills the Soul with Pain, and with Confusion; but when we have discharged our Duties, *been of good courage, and behaved ourselves as men*; then we can say *before*, with Chearfulness, *The Lord do that which seemeth him good*; and bear it handsomely *after*, be it what it will. We may be then unfortunate; but still we shall be innocent, and neither be accused nor condemned by our own selves, or others: We acted prudently and well, but were not Masters of the Event; that was in God's Hands, and *he hath done that which seemed him good*.

The Application I intend to make of all these Matters to our selves, will be both short and plain. We are, we know, involved in War alike with all the World; though the Occasion of it is not the same with that of *David's*, yet it is full as great and necessary: The *Hanun* that we have to deal withal, does not descend to treat *Ambassadors* villainously, but their *Masters*; deals with them all as Vassals, or as Children; does not cut off their Garments to the middle, but divests them of the whole, with mighty Scorn and Insolence; and cuts not off their Beards, but pares them to the Quick; is not at War with all his Neighbours only, but with Faith and Honour, Truth and Justice, and Religion; who knows no Distinction betwixt Right and Wrong, but makes his Pleasure and Convenience the Standard of his private and his publick Actions: That has enraged the whole World against him, and like a ravenous Wolf called all the Neighbourhood out to hunt their common Enemy; that notwithstanding all his open Force and Strength, and all his secret Charms, hath kept no active Ally or Confederate with him, but the publick and professed Enemy of Christianity; and that too by such Arts and Methods, as both good *Christians* and good *Turks* abominate: One that besides these publick Evils, hath, by the Vices and Impurities of his private Life, finned himself into a dreadful Fear and Superstition; and has been labouring for some Years to appease and placate God by human Sacrifices, by Cruelty and great Barbarity, by the Destruction of his own Subjects, and by exhorting and assisting other Princes to do the like. One, in a word, that has almost all the evil Qualities of all the ancient and renowned Sons of Violence, without the Shadow of their Virtues, or Pretence to any of their Merits: This is the Enemy I would exhort you to be of good Courage against; and say with *Joab*, *Let us play the Men*. For though these Words were spoken to an Army, ready to engage in Fight, yet they are full as fit and proper for a peaceful Auditory; for *we*, as well as Soldiers, are concerned in all the Events of War: *We* are the Body, of which *they* are the Hands to defend us; and if *we* do not quit ourselves like Men, it will be to little Purpose what *they* do: If *we* by our Despondency or Fear, by our Divisions and undue Heats, by our Remissness or Neglect of publick Concerns. by our Rapaciousness or Parsimony, where there



is no need, or any other Methods, starve or discourage *them abroad*, we shall in vain think to be safe our selves *at home*; for whatever be the Event, *We* shall be sure to feel the worst Effects of it. Here *are the People and the Cities of our God*; Here are the Lives we have to lose ourselves, and those we value equally with our own; Here are the Laws and Government, so famous over all the World, for *Liberty* without *Licentiousness*, for *Monarchy* without *Tyranny*, and for *Subjection* without *Slavery*: Here are the Fortunes and Estates the best secured that can be, not subject to the Assessment or Taxation of an arbitrary, lawless Prince alone, whose Vanity or Folly, bad Designs or Wantonness, might drain the labouring and industrious Subjects; nor yet so much the private Master's own, as that he should deny the Use of what the Publick finds is necessary to discharge its Duty. Here, lastly, are *the Cities of our God*, the best Religion in the World, founded and built upon the Laws of God, and established by those of the Land: And if all these Considerations are not strong enough to persuade us to *be of good courage and play the men* in their behalf, there is nothing left to do it, we shall deserve to lose them all. The very Apprehension of the Loss of any *one* of these, though sometimes in Imagination only, and oftentimes at great Distance, has frequently alarmed us to great Care and Watchfulness, and raised our Hearts and Resolutions; and if all of them together, in most apparent Hazard, by a strong and subtle Enemy, will not encourage us, nay, force us to a brave Defence, and quitting of ourselves *like Men*, we shall be miserable to Extremity; but shall be miserable without Excuse or Pity. When Men's Misfortunes come apparently from God's Hand, from some unlucky Accidents, that neither all their Wisdom could foresee, nor all their Power and Care prevent; then, as I said, they become the Objects of Compassion: But when their Folly or their Carelessness, their Cowardise or Falshood, are the Occasions of their Sufferings, the World around must laugh at and despise them, and their own Hearts reproach and condemn them. If after we have gone thus far, and made such fair and towardly Advances to a thorough Deliverance of ourselves from many *certain*, and more *threatned* Evils; and of the rest of *Europe*, from the Chain provided for them, we should not now go on, behave ourselves like Men, and second with our Hearts and Hands, and all the Assistance that we can, the great and generous Purposes of our *King* abroad; if we should either by Dissensions, or ill-timed Frugality, weaken his Hands and Heart, or those of his Allies; we should deservedly become the Hissing and the Scorn of all the Earth; our Chains would then become our Necks, and Slavery fit gracefully upon us, because we took such Pains for, and because we did so well deserve it: And where should we look for Pity and Compassion then, when our own Hearts would load us with Reproach and Infamy, and great Confusion? But far be such Suspicion from us; far be the Omen of these Miseries; we have a much more lightsome, comfortable Prospect of Affairs; the Cause is just and honourable, so is the End, and so are the Means; it is not *Joab* now, but *David*, that exhorts *to be of good courage, to play the men*; not thoughtless Fools, or trifling Children, but *the men, for our people, and for the cities of our God*. And let us therefore hearken to him; let us both animate ourselves and others with the Consideration, that all we have that is near and dear to us is at Stake, and that we owe our best Endeavours to them; and when we have done all that lies within our Power, let us with *Joab* say, *The Lord do that which seemeth him good*; for then it will be Time, and not before: Then let the Event be what it will, we shall be satisfied; then we can answer it to ourselves and all Posterity, although we are in Chains and Bondage; we did what we could and should; we took the Courses that we judged most reasonable and fit; we were not wanting to ourselves; but God is above us all, and knows what we deserve, and what is most convenient for us; he is the Arbiter and wise Disposer

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of our Persons and Affairs; he is the Master of Events, and gives us out the Lots that best befit our Circumstances; and we must be contented with them, be they what they will; and say with *Joab* here, and good old *Eli* in another place, 1 *Sam.* iii. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.*



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## S E R M O N

Preached at *Guild-Hall* Chapel, *December* the  
11th, 1692. before the Right Honourable the  
Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen.

ECCLES. VI. 11, 12.

*Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?*

*For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain  
life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall  
be after him, under the sun?*

THE great End and Design of King *Solomon* in this Book, is, To shew wherein consists the true and lasting Happiness of Mankind; which he in short comprises in the fearing God, and keeping his commandments. But knowing the World was old, and had been long in full Possession of another sort of Notions and Conceits of Happiness than what he came to teach, he found it necessary, first to undeceive it of its Errors, correct its wide Mistakes, and root up its ill-founded Prejudices and Prepossessions in this Matter. And to this end, the Preacher (as he calls himself) well knowing it was as hard a Task to unlearn an old Mistake, as to take up a Lesson of new Truth, spends half his Sermon in discovering to the World the Emptiness and Vanity of those four great Ends in which the Generality of Mankind had concurred to place their chief Felicity, namely, in *Wisdom*, *Pleasures*, *Honours*, or in *Riches*; on each of which he argues from particular Mischiefs and Dissatisfactions, and irresistibly concludes, That each of them was *vanity and vexation of spirit*.

He was the fittest Man to pass this decretory Sentence and decisive Judgment, that ever yet was born into this World, of human Parents. For though there have been Princes of as dissolute a Soul, and as unbounded Luxury as *Solomon*; although there have been Princes that have raised their Slaves and Bondmen to Dignities and Wealth, that far surpassed the Glory and the Riches of the Kings of *Israel* and of *Judah* both together; yet none of them were ever fitted equally with *Solomon*, to give a true Account and Character of either Pleasure, Wealth, or Honours, because they wanted Wisdom with the rest, and consequently neither understood the Use and Worth, nor yet the Vanity and Emptiness of those Enjoyments. When we see a Man over-run with Pleasures, or behave himself with Insolence in Honour, or employ his Wealth to evil Purposes, we presently conclude the Fault is in his Judgment, and that the Things themselves, and in their own Natures, are such as Men of Wisdom and Understanding may both place and find therein abundance of true and solid Happiness. But *Solomon's* Experience, and the Sentence that he passes on them, is sufficient (one would think) to silence all Suggestions of that nature. He was the richest and most glorious King that ever ruled in *Israel*, and made his Wealth and Power subservient to his Pleasures. And to all this, the most consummate Knowledge that a human Heart and Head is capable



pable of bearing, was bestowed upon him; bestowed upon him at the first, and in an Instant too; not acquired by Art and Industry, nor laboured out by long Experience; which Kind of Wisdom is commonly bought with a great deal of Time, and a great many Miscarriages and sad Mistakes. And if a King, wise as the Oracles of God, and wise before he entered on his Wealth, and Power, and Pleasures, (which never Man besides him was;) if he pronounce this Judgment, both from the perfect Knowledge and the full Enjoyment of them all, That *they are vanity and vexation of spirit*; there is enough, without recurring to the Infallibility of Scriptures, to be certain of the Conclusion; for what he says elsewhere, is very applicable here; *What can the man do that cometh after the king, but that which hath been already done?* The King hath tried and done all, and that with greater Assistances and more Advantages than any Man besides hath done; and yet declares, That *all is vanity and vexation of spirit*. And what can any Man do after him, but try the same, and make the same Conclusion too, if he be wise; or rather make the same Conclusion without the Trial, and be content to be wise at Solomon's Expence?

The Text is the Sum and Conclusion of all Vanities, the Epilogue of all these false Felicities. *Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?*

It may be some one might object, What though a Man do not find his Account in *Wisdom*; it may be, the Pursuits of it are painful without Benefit, exceeding hard to get at all, and yet of very little Use when gotten; and it may be that Conclusion is very true, *That in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow*. Yet there are other things in which a Man may seek and find his Happiness in this Life, such as it may be, Pleasure, Honours, or Possessions; and that if one should fail a Man, another may be sure to make him good amends for his Mistakes in Judgment, or his Labour lost in Practice. Solomon, therefore, (aware of this to be sure) concludes them all, upon Experiment, under the same condemning Sentence; tells his Hearers, That certain Happiness was not to be found in any thing of this Life: That it was never the better for Men, that there were many things and different Objects in this World to place their Happiness upon, since all those many things and different Objects carried their many and their differing Vanities along with them, and multiplied Vexations to their Pursuers and Possessors. What is it better for a Man to have more Occasions to employ his Care and Industry upon, since he thereby has but the more Defeats? What is it better for a Man to have Diversity of Objects to fix his Hopes upon, and raise him more and greater Expectations, since he thereby has only more and greater Disappointments?

This Verse is capable of, and hath had other Meanings put upon it; but this seems both the best and properest, and connects it with what went before, and what follows. —For, *who knoweth what is good for man in this life?* Though there be many Things, never so many Things, (which yet may be ranked under those four heads) yet what is Man the better as to the attaining true Felicity in them, since they are all of them in vain, and have no true Felicity belonging to them? But if they had, Man were as far from getting it as ever, since he is ignorant wherein it does consist, and what it is would make him happy in this Life. *Who knoweth what is good for man in this life?* The most exalted Understanding in the World, the clearest Foresight and the strongest Reason, with the most mature Judgment, is commonly as much mistaken in its Choice of what is good for Man in this Life, as he that commits it to the Chance of a Pair of Dice, or the Arbitration of some thoughtless Child: And that because of the Uncertainty of future Events, which human Wisdom cannot possibly foresee; and the Instability of Things present, which human Power cannot possibly fix and fasten. And since it is not worth the Name of Happiness, that is exposed to so much Chance, and of such short and uncertain Duration, it is impossible for  
Man



Man to know and chuse what is good for him in this Life, and where to find his true Happiness; *For who can tell a man what shall be after him?* Who is there knows what Time to come will bring forth? whether to Morrow's Event will not spoil to Day's Happiness, and quite unravel the best knit Plots, and frustrate the most probable Designs that can be.

The Words in general thus explained, will afford us Three Propositions to consider :

I. That though there are many Things, and great Diversity of Objects for Men to busy themselves about, and seek their Happiness and Satisfaction in ; yet it is never the better for them, because they all increase Vanity, they are all of them vain, and it is in vain to think of finding our true Happiness in any, or in all of them.

II. That though these several Things would really much conduce to the bettering Men's Conditions, and procuring to them Happiness; yet it were never the better for them, they would be never the nearer Happiness, because no Man knows what is truly good for him in this Life, and most convenient to the attaining of that End.

III. That though a Man should be so fortunate, as to light upon what was good for him at present, yet he would have no great Reason to exult, because his Good may be short-lived, and change its Nature in a little time ; *For who can tell what shall be after him?*

Of these in their Order. And, *First*, That the Diversity and Multitude of Objects are all of them vain, they all increase Vanity. And this cannot better be demonstrated, than by considering in short the Vanity of those Four Heads, of *Wisdom, Pleasure, Riches, and Honours*; to which the World in general is devoted, in which they think to find their Happiness, and to which all other Things are easily reduced. And,

*Ist*, Of Wisdom; *I had gotten* (says Solomon, chap. i. ver. 16.) *more wisdom than all they who have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart had greater Experience of wisdom and knowledge*; but, in the very next Verse he says,—*I perceived that this also was vexation of spirit; for in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.* Not to speak much of the Difficulties of acquiring Wisdom here, and getting but a tolerable Share of Knowledge; how many Years are spent in providing the Memory with Words and Images; how many in applying Words to Things; how many more in fitting them to understand Coherences, and making them attend to Consequences and Connections? And when the Mind is thus prepared with necessary previous Elements, what work is there, to dispose it to see the Convenience and Necessity of its pursuing Wisdom? How much of Life is over-slipt, before it thinks there is any Need of farther Understanding, and before it can be brought to set about that Business in good earnest? And when it is convinced and resolute, what Pains, what Trouble and Perplexities are there in laying down one single Prejudice and Prepossession? What Labyrinths and Intricacies do we wander in, when we would solve some new or old Effects of Nature? How deep and dark are her Recesses? How hidden and obscure are all her Causes and her Operations? How subtle and entangling are the Nets of Error? How hard is it to separate it from Truth; and how involved is Truth itself in Controversies and Disputes? What a world of staggering Probabilities on both Sides? And if a Man be settled with some fair Appearances and specious Amusements to-day, he is, perhaps, awakened by some sharper and severer Truths to-morrow; and the next Day's Thoughts put him again into a State of new Distraction and Irresolution. To name no more, How hard is it to fix on any Point, and to pursue



due it closely to the End? What infinite Labours, and almost insuperable Difficulties, does our inquisitive and curious Itch of new Varieties put us upon; so that we pass our Lives away in our Diversions and Excursions after collateral Things, and lose the very Sight and Scent of our main Purpose and Design? Not to dwell, I say, long on these, and on a thousand, and ten thousand other Difficulties that attend the Acquisition of Wisdom, and the getting a little more than ordinary Understanding. Not to enlarge too far upon the Troubles of possessing Wisdom; its most insatiable and voracious Appetite; its never being filled with any Addition to it: Thirst after Knowledge is like that of Riches, and increases with it. It is (as one hath well expressed it) like Drink to a Man in a Fever, which inflames the Appetite to a more impetuous craving; which is a very painful and uneasy State, and shews the Vanity and unsatisfying Emptiness of Knowledge, and brings abundance of Vexation with it. Not to insist on the rest of the Disquiets that attend it: The unreasonable Fears it infuses into the Soul, by scaring it with fantastick and imaginary Dangers, which may come to pass; and perhaps would, if this World were governed according to the Rules of human Wisdom, and an uninterrupted Train of reasonable Causes: The vast Desires it fills us with, as well from the Consideration of the Capacity and Comprehensiveness of the Soul, as from the good Opinion it cherishes in Men of their Abilities: The Jealousies it subjects Men to, from the same Reason, of making them self-conceited, and imagining sufficient Honours and Respects are not paid them; with other Doubts, Impatiencies, and restless Emulations, which are, if not the necessary, yet the usual Fruits of Wisdom in Possession: Besides the sowing and corrupting all that Gaiety of Heart, and chearful Temper, Men would otherwise be of; there being nothing more observed to make Men peevish, fretful and morose, impatient of Opposition, and imperious in Conversation, than a retired and studious Life, and a close, severe way of thinking and examining Matters.

Not to insist, at last, upon the Danger there is of parting with this Knowledge Men have had in their Possession, in a very little time, by the Treachery of an unfaithful Memory, by the Accident of some strong Disease, by the Driness and Defects of old Age; or, lastly, by the Stroke of Death; after which, *there is no more remembrance of the wise man than of the fool; seeing that which now is, in the days to come shall be forgotten.* Not to insist at large on all these, the Painfulness of getting, the Trouble of possessing, and the Fear of losing Wisdom, all which do most abundantly argue its Vanity: We may suppose a Man, inspired as *Solomon*, with natural Wisdom, and fully assured of keeping it till Death; yet it would not much contribute to his being happy in this Life.

There is no Man, let him place his Happiness in what he will, but either wants an Accession of some new Thing he desires, or the Removal of some old Inconvenience, or else a firm Continuance of the State he is already in; all which depending mostly on the Wills of other Men, or on Accidents in Nature, which are varying every Day, uncertain, unsecure to be relied upon, not possible to be foreseen; or, if foreseen, to be prevented; it is not the Wisdom of this World that can make or keep Men happy.

What if the wisest Man on Earth wants, to compleat his Happiness, a new Accession of Estate, or an Inheritor to what he has, or Virtue, Wisdom and Sobriety in that Inheritor; which Way shall Wisdom and Understanding make Provision of these Things? Since, as *Solomon* tells us, *Prov. ix. 11. That bread is not to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.* But if he should have an Estate, and want an Heir, he would, it may be, do like *Solomon*, *Chap. ii. 18. Hate all his labour which he had taken under the sun, because he was to leave it to a stranger after him.* But if it were a Son, *Who knoweth*



*knoweth whether he shall be a wise man, or a fool? Yet he shall have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and shewn myself wise under the Sun: And surely, this is also vanity.* And let no Man think it is unworthy of a wise Man, or below him, to desire, or set his Heart upon such things as these; or want them, to compleat his Happiness: For Solomon's Experience, and a very little Insight into human Nature, will assure him it is otherwise.

What if the wisest Man living want to remove some Bar and Hindrance to his Happiness, (for it is with wise Men sometimes, as it was with proud *Haman*; who, though he was the second Person of an hundred twenty-seven Provinces, and received the Bows and Adorations of all the Princes in the *East*; yet was not quiet for the Stiffness of *Mordecai*, one inconsiderable *Jew*;) they want some little Matter or other in their way to be removed, that troubles all their Peace and Quiet: And their Wisdom commonly is as little able to help them out, as Folly itself would be; whether the Bar be put by natural Accidents, or by the Obstinacy and Opposition of some reasonable Agents.

For the first, Of Accidents: It is acknowledged, that *no Wisdom is a Match for Chance*: But for the latter, Opposition of Men; one might think, that Wisdom might deal well enough with that; but the contrary is commonly seen: For, What if a Man know both the Tempers, and the several Interests of Men, and understand the whole Art of Business, and the Management of practical Affairs? since it happens very frequently, that the Passions and Inclinations of Men do apparently prevail against their true Interest; so that, to deal with them in the way of Reason, is to lose one's Labour on one hand: And sometimes Interest prevails against the strongest Inclinations, and the Bent of all their Passions; so that to deal with them in the way of Nature, is to lose one's Labour on the other side; and sometimes some unreasonable Pet, some trifling Jealousy, and some ill-grounded Error, prevails against Men's Interest and Inclinations, and frequently their Judgments too. So that if a Man's Happiness depend upon his being able to deal with others, (as it often does) it is, at least, an even Lay, that the superior Wisdom shall not be successful; and if he chance to light upon one that is as wise as himself, there is some Reason seen why he does not gain his Point, but no great Comfort in the Consideration.

But if, in the third place, a Man's Happiness require a Continuance in the State he is already in, it is not all the Wisdom of the World that can secure it to him. What Wisdom is it that secures Men from setting their Affections on the perishing Things of this Life? Where is the Philosophy that can hinder a Man from loving his Estate, or his Friends, immoderately? What Art or Understanding calls Men off from doting on their Children, from liking even every thing they say or do, from finding Wit in all their Words, and Grace and Comeliness in every Action? So that when Death deprives them of their Friends, their Favourites, or their Children, their Sorrows are then multiplied, according to their foolish Fancies; and they have then a Number of most solid, true, substantial Torments and Regrets, equal to that of their imaginary and conceited Pleasures; and in this Case they lose much more than ever they truly had: For, wretched is the After-game that wise Men play, as well as Fools, on these Occasions; and there is no greater Mistake, than to think that the Wisdom of this World (of which I have all along been speaking) is a Preservative against the Mischiefs of unreasonable and unruly Sorrows. For, whether it be, that wise Men think they know the Value of their Losses better than the rest; or whether their Senses are refined by Speculation, and they become thereby more susceptible of these sad Impressions; or from what other Reason: they are commonly more stricken with those Accidents than other Men, and more impatient and untoward under them. So that, upon a serious Recollection, it is an hard thing to find the Advantage of worldly Wisdom



dom above the Plainness and Simplicity of common Men: It contributes as little to Men's Happiness; *it is also vanity and vexation of spirit.*

And if it be thus with Wisdom, (as might be proved from endless Instances) which is, without Contradiction, and without Comparison, infinitely superior to either Pleasure, Honours, or Riches, there will be less need of enlarging much on any of them, or proving them improper for the procuring or preserving Men's Happiness: But because the World is in Possession of other Opinions of these Things, and more Men live by Example than by Rules of Reason, and are more sensible of Pleasures, and the rest, than capable of being wise; a word or two of each of them.

2dly, Therefore of Pleasures: It is certain, that the Happiness of this Life is that (and no other than that) which Men esteem their Happiness; so that Men are never the more or less happy for placing their Content and Pleasure in Things solid or light, ridiculous or grave, superficial or substantial; because it is the Opinion Men have of Things, and not the Things themselves, that make Men happy. He that is worth 100,000*l.* yet thinks it is too little for his Purposes and Ends, is not happier than he that is Master of an 100*l.* and thinks it is enough for him: He that has all the World, besides the particular Thing he wants, is still unhappy, if he place his Happiness in what he wants. So that it is false and foolish too, to deny the Happiness of this Life to consist in *Pleasure*, if by Pleasure we would only mean *a State of being pleased, a Rest and Acquiescence of the Mind in the Condition Men are in.* And *Epicurus*, fairly understood, was in the right, before the Oracles of God declared the contrary; if they too did not rather only change the Particulars, in which Men ought to seek and place their Pleasures and their Happiness, and determined them to Things certain, constant, solid, and more durable, than the Light of natural Reason could discover to them. And therefore, when King *Solomon* declaims against Pleasures; and says, *they are vanity and vexation of spirit*; he means especially Men's criminal Delights, their wicked and unlawful Pleasures, and those polluted Joys that ruin both the Soul and Body; and which, by way of Eminency, have gotten the Name of *Pleasure* fixt peculiar to them. But when he speaks of the Vanity of other innocent Diversions and Delights, it is then with respect to their Shortness and Uncertainty; their Emptiness, and dissatisfying Nature; the disproportionable Returns they make to Men's Desires, the Pains they are at to compass them, the Disquiets and Impatiences of waiting for them, and the speedy Flights they take from them: So that it is hard to say, or name the Point of Time, in which they exist. And as little can be said in behalf of *Honours*, or of *Riches*. They are indeed, both of them, exceeding useful, and exceeding necessary to the World; but they are much more serviceable to others, than to their own Masters; *they* are commonly the last People they make happy, if at all. What serves the Pomp and Honour of a Coronet, the Veneration of a Mitre, and the Terror of a Judge to themselves? They are serviceable to the keeping Dignity and Decency in the Commonwealth, to the preserving Unity and Order in the Church, and to the Security of Men's Lives and Families, and Reputations and Estates; but all the Benefit their Masters find in them, is from the Reflection of those Honours from the meanest and most miserable People: And if their Servants and Dependants are not happy, or respected, it is manifest, they think themselves dishonoured and abused; and consequently their Happiness, which is placed in these Things, is exceedingly precarious, and in every Man's Power to interrupt and spoil. And besides, the Happiness of being honourable, or very rich, is much abated by the Restraint that is laid upon Men, of owning or confessing it: For whatever other Men, or whatever a Man thinks of himself, yet it is not come to that pass yet, that Men dare publicly boast themselves happy for either Honour or Riches: They rather chuse to pass some sober, mortifying Sentence on those States, and deprecate the Mischiefs that do commonly attend them.

Now



Now though Men understand them pretty well, yet it is some kind of Trouble to conceal their Happiness, and not tell in what their Vanity and Folly do most abound. Not to enumerate the Dangers and Misfortunes these two States subject Men to, of being insolent, oppressive, vain, luxurious, thoughtless, and Abundance of other Mischiefs that conspire against Men's Happiness in these Conditions; few are the Instances of those whom Wealth and Honours have made happier than they were before, and many of those whom those two States have betrayed and ruined. But,

II. Although these several Things would really much conduce to the bettering Men's Conditions, and procuring to them Happiness; yet Man would be but little better for them, because no Man knows what is truly good for him in this Life, and most convenient to the attaining of that End. Though all of them should in their own Natures, and in the Opinion of the World, be very good and fitted to make their Masters happy; yet the Circumstances of Men's Affairs are so different and intricate, and the Tempers of Men so humourfome and uncertain, and the Accidents of Fortune so strange and many, that, it may be, that which would make ten thousand People happy, shall contribute to one Man's Misery: That which would make a Man happy this Day, shall To-morrow, perhaps, undo him. Nay, That in which Men have been happy many Years, is that which will at last turn to their great Grief and Misery. So short is our Foresight, and so vain and weak all our Endeavours, either to wish for, to pursue, or to preserve what is truly good for us in this Life.

*What wilt thou give me, (said Abraham to God) seeing I am childless?* When God had hardly made an End of promising to be his shield, and his exceeding great reward: As if it had hardly been in God's Power to make him happy any other way, than by giving him an Heir, instead of *Eliezer of Damascus*. But when the Day of Trial and Temptation came, and this so longed-for Heir was to be sacrificed and killed by him himself, there is no doubt but the Torment of that Thought did far exceed all the Delights that he had ever taken in that Son; and he was so far from thinking a Son would make him happy, that he found it was the only thing that could reduce him to the extremest Misery a mortal Man is capable of.

What could be more honourable for *Jephthah*, than from a wretched and despised Outlawry, to be intreated by the Elders of his People to return, and take the Rule of *Israel* into his Hands? What Vows and Prayers could seem more proper and convenient, both for *Israel* and himself, than Vows and Prayers for Victory? Who is there, that, in those his Circumstances, can (even in Fancy) think, that any thing was half so necessary to compleat his Happiness, as Conquest over *Ammon*? And who but would have thought, that grateful Offer which he made to God, before his going out to fight, might have been a kind of Tye and Obligation to have both gotten and secured him Happiness? Yet all was contrary: He had better have continued a despised Exile, or perished by the Sword of *Ammon*; for the Sun that rose upon his Victory, and saw not an happier Man in all the Host of *Israel*, nor a more glorious and triumphant Conqueror elsewhere, yet shut not in at Even, a more deplorable and wretched Creature.

One Man fancies, that if he had but an Estate, he were compleatly happy; he would use it with great Temperance himself, and do abundance of good to others. He finds himself disposed to do a great many hospitable and generous Things, but wants Supplies agreeing to the Largeness of his Heart: He finds his Bowels yearn at Objects of Compassion, and would relieve them if he could: He only seeks for Riches, to oblige Mankind, and conciliate the Favour of God, and be entirely happy. But if, by Accident or Industry, he does grow rich, his Heart and Purposes are commonly changed with his Condition, or his Desires grow even with his Substance, and he is still



as unable to do the good he desired to do, as before; the Poor are still as poor and empty as they were, though his Bowels still yearn on, and the Man persuades himself he longs to be doing good, but, to his great Discomfort, wants Ability. This is the best of the Case, that a Man with his Riches does no harm, although he does no good; but it seldom rests here, he is either tempted to forget God, and sacrifice to his own Drags, or falls by degrees into a State of Luxury and all Excess, and makes the Things that should have been for his Good, an Occasion of his falling; and is to his Cost convinced, that it is better to continue poor, with good Desires, than rich without them; or with them, when they come alone; and that he was not made to be happy by Riches, but was mistaken in the Means of compassing his End.

Another Man believes a Place of Honour and Authority would make up all his Wants, and compleat his Happiness; and thinks withal, he should be capacitated to do a great deal of Service to his Country in it; he should right the wronged, and relieve the oppressed, and do Justice to the poor and needy, with Abundance of other notable good Turns: But when he is in Honour and Authority, he grows, it may be, proud and insolent, regards not Right or Wrong so much as Favour and Convenience; uses his Interest and Power to private Ends and evil Purposes; and is, instead of being happier in that higher Station, but more involved in Troubles, and perplexed in Mind: And when he turns him to his Inside, sees he was not made for Honours and great Places, and that his clambring upwards brought him not to Happiness, but to the Danger of a great Fall, and an uneasy Seat in the mean while.

Another thinks, his good might be procured by Oratory and the Power of Eloquence, and spends his Lamps and Nights, in reading the Works of the great Masters of that Faculty, and turning over *Cicero* and *Demosthenes*; but had better spend an Hour or two in reading of their Lives and Ends: To see to what unworthy Purposes those mighty Parts were oft abused, what foul and wicked Acts those Streams of Eloquence were to wash away; what Emulations, Strifes, Contentions and Debates they were perpetually engaged in, and how fatal it was to both, *to speak beyond Comparison*.

The best Tongues have the most Causes, but they have commonly the worst too; and if they get greater Estates, they get the more Ill-will and Odium with them. And it is hardly possible for them to thrive exceedingly, but to the Wrong of some, and the Undoing of others. And who can think of being happy at the Expence of Truth and Justice, with any Comfort? Besides, that an eloquent Tongue and fluent is an Allurement to talking much, and holding up a Controversy, which engages Men (in Opposition) to say a great many unkind things, and a great many foolish, and a great many false; and if true, yet a great many vain and unnecessary things: It puts Men on the Rack, and often sharpens the Wit to a degree of Keeness, that ends, without great Care, in Spitefulness and Ill-nature; and, rather than want an Answer, or the making an handsome Period up, the Men of Wit and Fluence either chuse, or happen, to lose a fast Friend, to disoblige a great Man, and create a powerful Enmity. It is like a sharp and double-edged Knife; for one Piece of Service it does its Master, it cuts his Fingers twice: and is so far from being fitted to make Men happy, that, as hardly one in a thousand attains to it, so it is hardly fit for one of an hundred thousand.

Another Man has a brave Heart, and strong Sinews, and fancies he is fitted for the Camp, and is designed for Happiness by Victories and Triumphs: But these are commonly the Dreams of Men at Ease, and the gay Results of Wine and good Company. He thinks not on the Toils and Hardships of that Life he meets withal upon Experience; the Straits of inconvenient Lodging, unwholsome Diet, and inclement Seasons; the perilous Attempts, the Insolence of Superiors, and Inferiors Mutinies; the spiteful Emulations, the base and infamous Detractions; the wicked Notions of Religion, Morals,



als, and true Honour; with the ridiculous Punctilio's of false: The severe revengeful Prosecutions of their idle Quarrels, the frequent Perjuries, the raging Blasphemies, the horrible Enormities, Injustices, Rapes, and Bestial Villanies, that commonly attend that way of living. And yet even this, and all the rest of the particular Conditions I have mention'd; and a great many more I have omitted, are in the Opinion of the World, fitted to make Men happy, with the Happiness of this Life; and most of them, it may be, in their own Natures, would in some wise conduce to it, if it were not for our Blindness in seeking, our Ignorance in using, and our Folly in abusing them. But,

III. Though a Man should be so fortunate as to light upon what was good for him at present, yet he would have no great Reason to exult, because his Good may be short-liv'd, and change its Nature in a little time. *For who can tell a Man what shall be after him?*

This Head does in some measure fall in with the other; and therefore, the less will serve to shew its Truth: And there is no need of proving this by Arguments or Deductions of Reason; there is only need that Men should open their Eyes and Ears, and attend to the Instances that meet them every Day, of private and of publick Persons, Families and Kingdoms, of Friends and Enemies, of Strangers and Acquaintances; how varying and uncertain all the Conditions of human Life are; how little any Man can promise to himself, or any else, the Continuance of the State he is already in; what sudden Turns of Fortune thrust Men out of their Felicity, which they imagined would have lasted them their Lives long; how many little unforeseen, unthought of Accidents disturb, and quite unsettle the most fixt and steady Course of Happiness? How one unlucky lowering Day rises, and interrupts the Peace and Joy of our whole Lives, and makes them set in Sorrow and Despair. *Boast not (saith Solomon) of to-morrow, for thou canst not tell what a day may bring forth,* Prov. xxvii. 1.

*Æmilius Paulus* was the greatest and the happiest Roman in his Time, for many Years; he had four Sons of great Hopes, and thinking two of them enough to propagate his Name, he gave the other two to be adopted into the bravest and the noblest Families of Rome. And having conquer'd *Perseus*, and his Kingdoms, (the Foil of four preceding Generals) he brought the King and all his Children Captives, to grace his Triumph and victorious Entry into Rome. But mark, how Fate with them, and with us the Providence of God, disposes of Events. The King design'd for Misery, had all his Children then about him, the greatest Comfort that his bad Estate could then bear; and the triumphant Victor lost his eldest Son a few Days before his glorious Entry, and his youngest three Days after. And though all Men thought before, that *Perseus* was the greatest and saddest Instance of the Uncertainty of human Happiness, yet then the Scene was changed, and all the Pity fell upon the old and miserable Conqueror.

There is no body, scarce, whose Knowledge, or whose Reading does not furnish him with Instances enough, and too many, of this Nature, to confirm him in the Opinion, that the Happiness of this Life is of a very short and uncertain Continuance; and that no Man can have reason to exult, or be secure in his present State, whilst liable to so many lamentable Accidents, and surrounded with such Hazards.

Since then, (to conclude) all these Things are so; since all is Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit; since there is no true Happiness to be found in any of those Things, in which Men chiefly place it, What must become of us? Are we brought into this World, to be perpetually deluded with the Hopes of being happy; yet nothing in it for to build those Hopes upon? Must we wander up and down, like poor bewildred Strangers, in quest of what we are never likely to obtain? Nature has planted in us all,



we find, Hopes and Desires of being happy; but we are left, it seems, to seek it where we can; and to feel it out, like hood-winked People, in perpetual Maze and Winding.

And is there then no Answer to these Questions in the Text?

Yes, there is: And he that put these Questions, gives himself a full and satisfying Answer to them all; but it is so far from my Text, that I must but just repeat it; for it is the very last Sentence in the Book: *Hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

If you desire to know what is good for Man in this Life, I will tell you: *Fear God, and keep his commandments: That is good for Man in this Life; All the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow. Though there be many things that increase vanity, yet there is something he may fasten on, that has no Vanity, nor carries any Manner of Vexation with it; and that is, fearing God, and keeping his commandments.*

Time and Chance make mighty Work and Alteration in every other State, but have no Power to interrupt and spoil the Peace and Happiness of this.

And, as the Ignorance and great Uncertainty of what may happen, argues the Vanity of all these other States, and is a great Discouragement to the pursuing them so warmly, and so zealously; (*For who can tell a man what shall be after him?*) so the Certainty of what will follow the Neglect or the Performance of this our Duty, *fearing God, and keeping his commandments*, is as great an Encouragement on the other hand, to the doing it: And that is, the Certainty of Judgment; *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.*

So that now we know *what shall be after us*: And knowing what is good for Man in *this* Life, is also good for him in *another*; we have our Answer to the Questions in the Text: And since we are convinced of the Vanity of all Things else, let us, at last, attend to this Divine Conclusion of the whole Matter, and *fear God, and keep his commandments.*



A

## S E R M O N

Preached before the QUEEN at *White-Hall*,  
February the 12th, 169 $\frac{2}{3}$ .

EZEKIEL xxxiii. 31.

*And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: For with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.*

THESE Words are part of God's Complaint to and by the Prophet, of the People's Non-Proficiency under the Ministry of *Ezekiel*, and the other Messengers of God's Word; notwithstanding all the Shew and fair Appearance that they made, notwithstanding all the Forwardness they came with to the House of God, the attentive Diligence they sat with, and the Love and Liking they pretended to the Sermons of the Prophets.

The Description of this is very plainly laid down in the Text; and it shall be my first Business, to consider it as plainly, and my second to assign some Reasons, as well as I can, why both the Prophets heretofore, and now our Ministry, is so unedifying and ineffectual.

*Son of man*, (saith God to the Prophet, in the Verse before the Text) *the children of thy people still are talking against thee, by the walls and in the doors of the houses.* By talking against the Prophet, is here meant about the Prophet; for it appears both from this, and the following Verses, that they liked the Prophet mightily; but because they acted contrary to his Instructions, they are said to talk against him, though in Words they talked in his Commendation: *And speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the Word that cometh forth from the Lord.*

There could not, one would think, be a better Disposition in the World than this; they were not only careful and ready to hear the Word themselves, but zealous also of their Neighbour's good. They invited each his Brother with great Tenderness, *Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord.* Such a good Forwardness was very pleasing heretofore to David; *I was glad*, (saith he, *Psalms cxxii. 1.*) *when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.* But it ended not in Invitations, for they came accordingly.

*They come*, (saith the Text) *as the people cometh*, i. e. in great Bands and Companies; they resort to the House of God in such Multitudes, that it looks like the going forth of a Nation to fight, or the gathering together of a People to some mighty Purpose; to speak in the modern Phrase, the Place was thronged exceedingly where-ever this *Ezekiel* preached or prophesied. And,

2dly, *They sit before thee*, saith God, *as my People.* They come and sit as People that profess to belong to God peculiarly; as People that would be signaliz'd and known by their Relation to him, as distinguished from the whole World. They sit as gravely and



and demurely in the House of God, they listen and attend as heedfully, as is imaginable; so that you could not chuse but take them for God's People. There is all the external Tokens and Gestures of Attention and Devotion possible to be shewn; and there is no Man but would think they met to good Purpose. And,

3dly, *They hear thy Words*; they did not make this Noise and Invitation of each other, and resorting to the House of God themselves in such great Companies, for nothing but to gaze about, or sleep, or talk impertinently, or worse; but to *hear* the Prophet; and they heard him. They came with full design and purpose to hear what was the Word that came forth from the Lord; and that was their Errand and Intention, to be instructed in the Will of God, to know his Precepts and Commands from the Mouth of his Messenger and Prophet; and that they heard.

But, *Lastly*, they did not only hear, but like, approve, and love the Word of God: *With their mouth they shew much love.* And lo, (saith the Verse following the Text) *thou art unto them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument*: They did not only like the Song, it seems, but the way of singing it, the Grace and Air with which he set it off; they did not only approve the *Matter* of the Prophet's Sermon, but the Manner of its Delivery too; the comely Mien with which he spoke, his graceful Way of Elocution, and the harmonious Cadence of his Voice. He had all the external Accomplishments, as well as internal, that a Man could want or wish for; and the People took great Notice of it, and had him in Esteem accordingly. But notwithstanding all these advantageous Ornaments in the Prophet, and all this Forwardness to hear, and favourable Disposition in the People towards him; yet it happened to his Sermons, as it does to lovely Songs, they pleased the Ear, and struck the Fancy for the present, but made no deep and sensible Impression on the Mind and Understanding; they did not influence them to practise any whit, what they so long'd to hear, and liked when heard and uttered by him; for so it follows in the Text: *They hear thy words, but they will not do them.* *With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.* *This people* (as is elsewhere said) *honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* Which is the second Thing I am to speak to, and if I can, assign some Reasons how the Prophet's Sermons heretofore, and now our Ministry, is so unedifying and ineffectual: And,

*First*, One Reason of some People's Non-Proficiency, may be this very Curiosity here described, this Itch of hearing one that preach'd so softly, and so sweetly, and with so good a Grace, *That his words were to them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice.* They came to hear the Word of the Lord, because it sounded sweetly from his Mouth: Because his Voice was tuneable; his Gestures and Deportment manly, comely, and excelling; his Periods round and flowing, and his Elocution sweet and powerful. And when Men only come to take in *Sound*, they will unavoidably return *empty*: When they only hunt for *Words*, they must not think of catching *Things of Substance*; and they who are intent upon the *Manner* only, must let slip the *Matter*. Not that all these Qualifications are not very desirable and advantageous both to Prophet and to People too; and that the one may wish for, and the other labour to attain these good Accomplishments, to the better carrying on the Work, and the greater Edification; but that there is Danger of laying too much Stress upon these Matters: The People find themselves moved and affected for the present, and are thereby tempted to regard no farther Edification, or to think they have already edified sufficiently; mistaking oft, the moving of their Fancies, for Operations on their Judgments and their Understandings; and the Prophet is thereby in Danger to be tempted to proceed in Ways so easy, and so acceptable, if he have not a good Share of Grace, and Honesty, and Prudence.

It cannot well, indeed, be otherwise, that Men who come with a light and trifling Spirit, prepared, and, as it were, resolv'd to be pleased with nothing but external Garbs  
and



and Modes of speaking, should come to any Purpose, or return the wiser, or the better, let the Prophet say whate'er he can. It is in this Case that Men seldom find any more than they seek for; and 'tis very natural to think, that Men that only come to gratify their Curiosity, to hear some new Things, some fine delightful Notions, and some fanciful Discourse, and to observe the Method and the Style, and Way of Preaching, should go away dissatisfied, if they meet *not* with these Things, and perfectly unedify'd if they do.

Another Reason of the People's Non-Proficiency, may be, their having *no Opinion*, or Conceit *at all* of the Prophet's Abilities; this is a worse Extream than the other; very discouraging of the Prophet, damps his Spirits mightily, and checks the Vigor of his Thought, and causes him sometimes to slacken his Endeavours. But whatever Effect it has on him, it cannot possibly have any good one on the People: They are thereby pre-disposed to meet whatever shall be offered them, with Neglect or supercilious Contempt: They have pre-judged his Performances already, and all he says, seems but as idle Talking. When once Men entertain a Prejudice against Men's Persons or Abilities, it is not easy to be reconciled, or to attend to what they shall deliver. Either they will not let themselves be persuaded, that what is said, is true and reasonable; or Truth itself becomes unacceptable from them: Men hear, and see, and judge, by their Affections. When once we have debased a Man in our Opinion, his very Looks become unlovely, his Actions are ungraceful, and all his Wisdom seems as Foolishness; the Spirit of Contradiction seizes on us, and we are ready to do Violence to our own Reason, rather than allow of *his*. The Complaint is of long standing, that most Men mind more *who it is that* speaks, than *what it is* that is spoken. So that since 'tis plain, Affections difference People's Persons, 'tis also plain they bias and corrupt Men's Judgments; and as the Excess corrupts them in their Favour, so want of Love corrupts them to their Prejudice. But, as I said, this is the worse Extreme of the two; for a good Opinion will improve the meanest Performances, some way or other, to its own Advantage; whereas a bad one will not edify under the ablest Ministry: So true it is, that light and idle People bring the Satisfaction along with them, which they think they come to seek for in these Places. They come, they think, to be pleased; but, indeed, they are pleased before with Fame, or something else, and therefore come. One may say on this, as St. James says on another Occasion, *My brethren, these things ought not so to be*.

A third Occasion of People's Non-Proficiency may be, their having by their Choice, or Accident, or Education, taken up some odd Opinions and peculiar Fancies in Religion, contrary to what is commonly and authoritatively taught; and Men are frequently so fond of their own Conceits and private Notions, that they do not only entertain with great Dislike the Doctrines that oppose them, and the Reasons that confute them; but for *their* Sakes, they frequently reject and cast by all *besides*; they will not abide what they have nothing to object to, for the sake of something that dislikes them; that is, a Man must be of my side altogether, before he can talk acceptably; and if he do not agree with me in this or that Particular, then I will dissent from him in any other; which shews more Love to *ourselves* than *Truth*, and that we rather like to be *humoured* than *convinced*. This is a very weak Occasion of Non-Proficiency; but as weak as it is, it is too common; and besides, I am assigning Reasons for such Effects as few or no Causes are sufficient for.

No, not even that which I am next in the *Fourth* Place to assign, (*i. e.*) the evil Life and vicious Practice of the Prophets; for though the wicked Conversation of the Priest, be the most horrible Reproach imaginable, and ministers Occasion to the greatest Scandal possible, and shall be punished with the most intense Degree of Torment; yet it will by no means justify any Imitation of his evil Practice, or excuse the Neglect or Contempt of his Doctrines, that are agreeable to Reason, and confirm'd by Scriptures: Be-



cause it is certain, all Men are obliged to live by *Rule*, and not *Example*. And though the Priest be indispensably obliged by all the Ties of Reason and Religion, to be himself the Example of the Rules of good Living, yet *his* Apostacy will cover no one's else from Blame or Punishment. Whether Priests, the more immediate Ministers in God's Service, are not tied to greater Sanctity and Strictness of Life, than other People, by God's Laws, may furnish Matter for Dispute, because the Laws of Virtue and the Precepts of Morality are general and common to all Mankind, together with the Priests; and all Men are obliged to be as good as possibly they can, and the Priests can be no more. But rather than contest this Matter now, I shall take it for granted, that Priests have a closer Obligation to live well and virtuously than other People, and that Vice as ill becomes *them*, as Corruption of the Law does a Judge, though all Men are alike obliged to Justice and Impartiality; or as want of Honour and Respect to a Prince becomes a Courtier, though all Men are alike obliged to pay them all they can, and all that is due, and neither Judge nor Courtier can do more. Yet notwithstanding this their closer Obligation to live holily and well, than other People's, *their* Relaxation of the Reins of Discipline, and living in Contradiction and Defiance to their Doctrines, as they cannot encourage any else to follow them in Practice, so they ought not to prejudice the Truth or Virtue of those Doctrines, or to hinder the Operation of them to the Amendment of Men's Lives. They do, indeed, too commonly and too easily do it; but it is with no Reason; there is no tolerably inferring from one Man's evil Practice to another's evil Practice, and much less his Unbelief; there is no concluding the People's Security from the Wickedness or the Self-Condernation of the Priest.

The Scandal that is given by wicked Ministers, shall heat their Furnace seven Times hotter than the rest; but the Scandal *taken* shall not lessen any one's Degree of Punishment; whoever offends by Example, shall be as guilty, and liable to as great an Infliction as the Crime itself deserves, and should have had, had there been no Example given; supposing that there be a Rule to walk by. *For it is rule we are to live, and shall be judged by, and not example.* An Example is, indeed, of use, to shew us that the Rule is practicable, and to excite us to Imitation; but every one in truth is bound to be himself the Example of the Rule. *It is impossible*, our Saviour says, *but that offences should come; and wo to that man by whom they come; it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he thrown into the sea.* This will unquestionably be the Fate of evil Pastors, that by vicious and disorderly Living, give Occasion of Offence and Falling to weak Christians; but the falling thus, and being thus offended, is not hereby lessened or excused; their Misfortunes do not grow the lighter. As the one should not *give*, and shall be punished for *giving*, so the other should not *take*, and shall be punished for *taking* that Offence, against a plain Rule and positive Command to the contrary.

In very dubious and uncertain Matters, an Example may be as reasonable and justifiable a Bias as any else whatever, if it be of one that is of presum'd Integrity and Understanding; because the following such an Example, is following the best Reason we have, and acting according to the best of our Understanding; which is, in dubious Matters, or such as lie beyond our reach, chusing the best for ourselves we can. But in Matters of Morality and plain Practice, where every one's Understanding is his Rule, and a sufficient one too, there, not an Hundred, nor a Thousand Instances, are sufficient to acquit a Man (no, not even to himself) offending against a known Rule; for it is not *Number*, but *Truth* that we must follow. Methinks I need not argue much in this behalf, to shew that People should not follow the Steps of wicked Prophets, whose Example they do commonly (and, truly, most deservedly) despise and hate. But the Commonness of the Excuse that People make, that they cannot profit under an evil Ministry, will do more than justify what has been said on this Account:



count: But it is, indeed, too near to flattering of ourselves, to seek for Causes at such distance, which lurk at Home so near us, even in our Hearts. And though the Parable of the Sower of Seed were primarily intended by our Saviour to shew the Impediments that would obstruct the Propagation of the Gospel at its first Preaching; yet it is very proper, and well fitted to express the several Causes that obstruct its Influence on the Minds of Men, in its Progression, even in every After-Age and Generation: And to some Enquirers of the Non-proficiency of Hearers under the Ministry, we may assign this fifth Cause:

5thly, Some are Hearers *by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they hear, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.* Some hear by *Chance*, and it is more than so, that they edify not at all with it. They stroll about like Vagrants, and light upon the Word of God, as on a Thing they thought not of, and part with it as easily. They come without Design, without any Consideration, or Preparation of the Heart; and as the Sower cannot scatter with so even an Hand, but some will fall by the Way-side, besides the Furrows and prepared Ground; so the Voice and Word of the Prophets will reach some that are as ill prepared to hear it, and who make so short and little use of it, that they can hardly say they *lost* it. It is no Difficulty for Satan to snatch that away, they found at unawares, and cared so little for, and held so weakly, and so slightly. It is true, indeed, that these unthinking Stragglers are sometimes caught by something accidentally delivered to them; and from a wavering and uncertain Faith, and loose Morals, are suddenly reclaimed and fixed, both in their Judgment, and a steady Course of Virtue and Obedience; but this is such an extraordinary, unusual Operation of the Spirit of God upon the Mind, that as there is no Promise of it made to any one, so there ought to be no Expectation of it. The least that any one can bring towards his Edification, is an Intention and Desire of being edified; no one in Reason can expect to be so benefited against, or without their Will and Inclination. But neither is a previous, bare Intention only, to be edified, sufficient; for many come with this, and yet return as empty as they came: It is also necessary, that some after-Care succeed; for, *Satan*, like a Bird of Prey, *cometh immediately, and takes away the seed*, scarce covered over, *that was sown in their hearts*; diverts them presently, and will not suffer them to meditate, or think deliberately on what they heard. He hates Consideration in the Sons of Men, and knows it is his mortal Enemy, and in a little time would overthrow his Kingdom, and therefore uses all his Art and Cunning to prevent it.

Another sort there are, our Saviour tells us, of Auditors that are represented by the Seed falling on the stony Ground; *These hear the word, and anon with joy receive it; but having no root, endure but for a time; for when persecution or affliction ariseth because of the word, they are presently offended.* Abundance of People come to Church with very good Designs and Purposes, and behave themselves well and devoutly there; listen attentively, and are very much affected with what they hear, and steadfastly purpose to put in practice what they find so applicable to, and what concerns themselves. But when they come to make the Experiment, and put their good Resolves in Execution; the Hold that Ease and Pleasure have taken on them is not easily let go; the Difficulties and Severities of Virtue and Religion stare them in the Face, and appear so formidable and unacceptable to human Nature, that they immediately give up their better Resolutions, and fall again into their usual Courses. They hear with Joy, and receive with Joy, and apply with Joy, and resolve with Joy to profit themselves of what they hear; but the Afflictions of Repentance and Obedience, of Mortification, and the Want of what they have so long been used to; the Prosecutions of Delights and Pleasures, that continually pursue and haunt the Mind; in a word, the leaving off delightful Things, and taking up unusual and unacceptable ones, is a great Cause of Non-Proficiency.



ficiency. The Doctrine is agreeable to Reason, they see its great Convenience and Necessity, indeed, but the Difficulty of the Practice spoils all, and sets them back again, and leaves them as their Resolutions found them; they would be admirable Christians, if nothing but Consent of Reason and Judgment were wanting; if they might live as they desire and do, without forsaking what they like, and taking up with what they like by no means: If believing what we say, and firmly purposing to act accordingly, were to edify, they would edify most abundantly; but as to practising what they hear, they say with *Naaman, The Lord pardon them in that thing.*

Another sort of unprofiting Hearers, are represented by our Saviour, by the Seed that fell among the Thorns,—*Such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entring in, choak the word, and it becometh unfruitful.* The former would have profited, but for Pleasure; these would be edified, but that Gain and Business hinder them. They hear right, and understand and apply right, but their Minds are estranged and carried off, by their intense Desires of growing Rich, and by the Multiplicity of their Concerns, and Clutter of Affairs. The World has taken such hold and fastning on their Hearts, that when they find themselves moved by any thing we say, and are inclined to loosen and relax, to mind their better and more lasting Interest; it still throws out some Bait or other to detain and keep them, some weighty Thing or other interferes, and either voids their Resolutions quite, or else defers them to a more convenient Season; which gives another like Temptation, Means and Opportunity to enter, and obtain its Day of hearing; and so the Life is lost in a Circle of Resolutions and Defeats, in Promises and steadfast Purposes, and cold Complaints for want of Opportunities. As the Prophet accuses in the Text; *With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.* They are sensibly affected with what they hear and learn, and like it very well, and express their Liking in Desires and Resolutions to observe and practise it; but their Hearts, when they come to Tryal, fail them and deceive them, and cannot be disentangled from their Business, and the Prosecution of their gainful Callings and Designs. When their Minds aspire to heavenly Things, this fatal Poise and Tendency to worldly Wealth, clogs them, and drags them downwards still, although against their Reason and Resolutions; and if this Son's Preferment, and that Daughter's Fortune were secured, they could attend on God without Distraction; they would then forsake a vain and sinful World, and its deceitful Riches, and lay up better, and more lasting Treasures, in a better Place, *where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where no thieves break through and steal;* but before this comes to pass, the Man grows old, and sees his little Images in Children's Children, and Nature quickens him again to greater Fondness, and they must have their Portions from new Toils and new Anxieties; and the Cares of this World begin again, and the Deceitfulness of Riches choaks the Word that hath so oft been heard with Joy and Gladness; and notwithstanding all his Approbation and his Resolutions to improve, yet it becomes unfruitful.

I know not well, how proper you may think it to assign such Causes of Men's Non-proficiency under the Ministry of Preaching, when the Pretence and End of Preaching is to remove those Causes and Impediments: It looks as if Physicians should excuse their ill Success, by assigning such and such Obstructions to the Energy of their Medicines, when it is the proper Business of their Art and Calling to remove those very Obstructions: It may rather seem to betray the Weakness of the Word of the Lord, to say that the Lusts and Pleasures, the Cares, and Love of Riches, hinder it from being fruitful, when it is that Word itself that is to mortify those Lusts, subdue those Longings, remove those Cares, and kill that Love of Riches at the very Root. To this we must say, that however powerfully and strongly the Spirit of God may sometimes operate on the Souls of Men, work off their Hearts and Inclinations from the Riches or the Pleasures



tures of this Life, and change them unaccountably, and almost in an Instant; which no one can deny has sometimes, in some Cases, happened; yet this is extraordinary, and no where promised, and therefore no where to be looked for, or depended on; it is like mighty, unexpected, undeserved Favours, to be accepted with all Joy and Thankfulness, and to be carefully improved to all Advantage; but it is what no one else must look for, though in the same Condition, and the same Necessity. The ordinary and usual Way is, arguing and enforcing People's Duties, by their proper Motives; shewing the Reasonableness, Convenience, and Necessity of their performing them; which must, for its Effect, depend upon the Grace of God, and on the Will, Capacity, and Teachableness of the Hearer: So that in the ordinary Conversion of a Sinner from the Evil of his Ways, these Three are unavoidably concerned.

*First*, The Minister must do his Part; which is to shew the Unreasonableness of the Ways of Sin, the natural Turpitude, and unagreeable Deformity there is in Vice, how opposite it is to the natural Light within, and to the Dictates of our Conscience; how prejudicial to them as they are Men, and live in this World, with respect to bodily Health, to Reputation and a good Name, and to their thriving in their Callings. Next to the Reasonableness of Virtue and Obedience, he can only shew the Convenience and Necessity of complying with the Will of God; the Peace and Pleasure, and Content of Mind that constantly attend the doing it, together with the ineffable, eternal Recompence that follows it hereafter. Or, on the other hand, the Pain, Uneasiness, and terrible Anxiety of Heart, the Affliction of a fearful and suspicious Mind, the Reproaches of Reason, the Remorse of Conscience, and that Hell on Earth that constantly attends the guilty, and the obstinately disobedient, together with a fearful looking-for of Judgment, that will certainly consign them over to Pains and Sorrows, that will know no Measure, nor no End. This is all the Minister can do, to urge Men to their Duties by their Fitness, by Promises and Threats, and by whatever other Motives are contained in Holy Scriptures, to press them in, and out of Season, and to contribute all he can to their producing their Effect. And though there may be mighty Difference in the Way and Manner of proposing Things, that some Men do it much more forcibly, and clearly, and convincingly than others, and in a much more acceptable Way; yet even the best of them can do no more than just propose, and lay these Things before them; *Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is from God that the increase must come*; there is both need of his preventing and assisting Grace, and it is from him we must expect the Blessing. It is certain, that without Him, of ourselves we can do nothing; but it is as certain, that he never fails to give what Grace is necessary and sufficient for that Purpose, if Men will use their best Endeavours, and employ his Gifts as he shall order and direct them. Where-ever any thing depends, for its Effect, on God and Man, in Conjunction and Co-operation together, we may be sure that God is never wanting to perform his Part, if Man will but do his: and though it may be difficult (in many Cases utterly impossible) for any one to know, or to describe the Methods and the Measures of God's Grace, in working on the Hearts and Minds of People to Conversion; yet of this we may be sure, that work it does, unless we ourselves put some Hindrance or Impediment in its way; and of this we may be also full as sure, that the Operations of his Grace and Holy Spirit, do not at all depend upon our Knowledge or our Understanding, how and when they operate: And that therefore, there is no expecting or attending till it operate, that we may ourselves begin; for Grace, like the Kingdom of God, comes not by Observation; but we must do our Duty all that possibly we can ourselves, and God will not be wanting. So that no one can excuse or cover his Continuance in Sin, upon Pretence that the Grace of God will not help him out; that, for his part, he is very willing, and uses his utmost Endeavours to extricate and disentangle himself; but that



the Grace of God is wanting to him, without which he cannot stir. That is true, that without the Grace of God he cannot extricate himself; but it neither is, nor can be true, that, if he be himself willing, and uses his utmost Endeavours, the Grace of God will fail; for it is by God's Grace that he is willing, and by God's Grace that he endeavours thus to free himself; for naturally, and of ourselves, we are told, we can neither *will*, nor *do* any thing of that kind; and the applying all such Arguments and Motives to our Duty, as it hath pleased God to reveal to us, and the using all those Means and Instruments which he discovers to us, and designs for those good Purposes, is using and improving the Grace of God, that Grace that is ordinarily requisite and necessary to Conversion: So that the Guilt at length will unavoidably devolve upon the Offender only. God cannot possibly be wanting; the Prophet cannot easily, (*i. e.*) so far as to excuse the Offender; and therefore Men themselves are only chargeable, and they must look at home for their Conversion, or their Condemnation. From all which it will appear, that though the Objection be so far true, that it is the Work of God's Word, and proper Business of the Preacher, to cure these Evils, to remove these Obstacles, and to subdue these Lusts and evil Appetites that hinder the Word of God from taking its Effect, and to reduce the disobedient, and reclaim the wandering Sinner from his evil Ways; yet it is by no means true, that it is derogatory to the Grace of God, that it works not forcibly and irresistibly upon the Minds of Men to their Conversion; nor to the Power of God's Word, in the Mouths and Sermons of his Messengers and Prophets; that their Preaching and Endeavours prove so ineffectual and unedifying; since all the Force they either do or can use, is natural and moral Suasion; they can but stir the Passions and Affections, and work upon the Reason and Understanding of People by suitable and proper Arguments; and whether they shall do that, depends very much upon the People themselves; but whether, when that is done, it shall prove effectual, (*i. e.*) shall influence them to Practice, depends entirely on them: They can but, like Physicians, prescribe a true and proper Medicine, and tell the Dangers of continuing in that evil State; but still the Use and Application of this Remedy depends, and will depend upon the Patient.

It remains, that I make an Inference or two from what hath been said, and so conclude. And,

*First*, Since it is plain from the constant, ordinary, and usual Method of God's proceeding in the converting and changing the People's Minds, that they must, to make them blameable and punishable by him, be at Liberty, whether they will receive Instruction or no, and practise afterwards what they shall be convinced becomes their Duty; since it is plain, I say, they must be at their Liberty, it is also plain, that the Fault must lie upon themselves, and that they have it in their Power to mend: And since all the Causes that either have been, or that can be reasonably assigned for People's Non-Proficiency, under the ordinary and standing Ministry of preaching, are such as do entirely depend upon the People themselves, there is no longer Time allowed for their Enquiries why, and their Complaining that they *do not* edify and profit more: For now the Power is in their Hands, and such a Power as may be for their Edification, or Destruction: Life and Death is set before them; the Bread of Life, the Word of God, that, as they chuse and use it, will be sure to prove either the Savour of Death to Death, or else the Word of Everlasting Life and Health: And therefore, there is need of all their Care and Diligence in hearing and attending, treasuring up, and practising their Duties, that they may not come together for the worse, but better. As therefore every body owns they come to Church with a Design to hear, and be instructed in what they know not; or to be put in mind of what they knew, but had forgotten, and to be moved to practise it; so the least that they can do in common Kindness to themselves, is, to see they do not lose their Labour: But when it is more-

over



over a Business of the greatest Moment and Importance in the World they are about, they are obliged undoubtedly to hear to purpose, and, to that End, to come with Minds prepared to hear the Truth, and to receive it kindly, though it thwart their nearest Interests, or their dearest Inclinations; to lay aside all Prejudice and Prepossession, either against Men's Persons, or their Doctrines, and to attend alone to what is said, and weigh its Reasonableness with Candour and Impartiality, according to the Truth, and its Conformity with Holy Scriptures. Men must not judge of either Prophets, or their Doctrines, by their own Affections or Desires: They must not do as *Ahab* did by *Micaiah*; *I know*, saith he, *there is one Micaiah, the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the Lord; but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.* The weak Prince had no regard to the Truth at all, but had rather be deceived, than not pleased; and hated him, because he prophesied unacceptable Things. Men must not look to be indulged in Things unlawful, and forbidden by God; or that his Message should not be delivered openly and plainly, though it would wound their Ears, and pierce their Hearts with many Sorrows. He ill becomes his Character, and little understands the Nature or the Dignity of his Calling, that will for Interest or Ambition, Fear or Favour, Love or Hate, dissemble in these Matters; and he is lamentably over-run with Fondness to himself, that would be for the present cheated into Peace and false Security, and knows it cannot last; but that his Dream will quickly end, and he shall wake in lasting and substantial Misery.

As it is the Prophet's Part to say with that *Micaiah*, (when he was tempted to delude the King with soft and pleasing Prophecies) *As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak*; so is it to be the People's Part to answer, as the Children of *Israel* did to *Moses*, when he had been telling them all the Words and Judgments of the Lord, *All the words which the Lord hath said, will we do, and be obedient.*

You are not to consider, whether what we say be acceptable to Flesh and Blood; whether the Doctrines we deliver, be consistent with your Profit, or your Pleasure; whether they cross your Interest, or your Inclination, nor any thing besides; but whether God hath spoken by us; whether the Things we say be so, or no, in Holy Scriptures; whether the Duties we exhort to, be so much your Interest and Concern to follow and perform as we persuade; whether such Peace and Satisfaction here, and such eternal, excellent Rewards hereafter, are assigned and promised to your Faith and your Obedience; and whether such amazing Punishments and Pains in everlasting Fire are treasured up against the Day of Wrath and Retribution for the Ungodly, Unbelievers, and Impenitent. And if you find these Things are so, you will make the Inference with *St. Peter*; *What manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness?* And see the great Necessity of complying with *St. James's* Advice, *To lay a-part all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls. To be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

Secondly, If it was thus even with *Ezekiel*, and the other Messengers of God, with *Moses* and the Prophets, with Christ himself and his Disciples; if they had Reason to complain of their unkind Reception in the World, of the Hardness of People's Hearts, and Unbelief, and of the little Fruit they found of all their Care and Labour in Performance of their Offices; if Men were deaf to all their Charms, charmed they never so wisely, warmly, and affectionately; there is less need that any now a-days, the faint and feeble Imitators of their Zeal and Virtue, should complain of their hard Fortune upon these Occasions. It is, in truth, a very great Discouragement in itself, to see such ardent Longings after People's Benefit, such zealous Prosecutions of it in such painful and industrious manner, prove so ineffectual as they oft-times do.

But



But though it may be Matter of Complaint and Sorrow, yet it is none of Fear, or of Repentance, when they do their Duty: They have these great Examples set before them, as well for their Comfort, as their Imitation, that they should follow them in the careful and conscientious Discharge of their great Office, and leave with them the Issue in the Hands of God; well knowing, that whatever be the Event, they shall be judged with righteous Judgment, and shall receive a glorious Recompence at God's Hand, for all their good Designs, and good Endeavours, although the Folly, or the Obstinacy of ungodly People, may have frustrated them both.

The Labours of the Prophets have a Threefold End.—The First, and best, and most designed by God, is, The effecting his good Purposes in bringing People to Repentance and Salvation. The Second is, The discharging of their Duties, and the exemplifying their Obedience in the several Instances of his Commands, and the saving of their own Souls. The Third and last, and the most lamentable one, is, The justifying God in his Judgments, and vindicating him in his Inflictions; that all Pretence of Ignorance, and Inability, and Forgetfulness, may be destroy'd by their Instructions, Admonitions, and Reproofs, and by their frequently repeated Cries and Calls, both in and out of Season, to Repentance, that Men may carry Condemnation in their Bosoms to the Day of Doom, and acquit their Judge before the World of Men and Angels. *That they (as St. Austin somewhere says, with which I will conclude) who will not glorify God's Mercy in the Amendment of their Lives here, may glorify his Justice in their Punishment hereafter.*



A  
S E R M O N

Against Clipping, preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at *Guild-Hall Chapel*, on *December 16th, 1694.*

GENESIS xxiii. 16.

*And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named, in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currant money with the merchant.*

**A**FTER a generous Contest betwixt *Ephron the Hittite*, offering freely as a Gift the cave of *Machpelah*, and *Abraham* handsomely refusing so to take it, but desiring earnestly to purchase it for a possession of a burying-place amongst them, at an appointed Price, it was agreed, That he should pay four hundred Shekels of Silver for it. And *Moses* tells us in the Text, That *Abraham weighed to Ephron*, &c. Of which Words, the Use that I intend to make, at present, will be this, to take occasion from them to consider, *First*, The Use and Necessity of Money to the carrying on the Trade and Commerce of the World. *Secondly*, The Mischiefs of corrupting and debasing Money, the coining of bad Metal, or the clipping and stealing from good. *Thirdly*, The Reasonableness and Justice of the Laws that punish such Offenders.

*First*, Of the Use and Necessity of Money to the carrying on the Trade and Commerce of the World.

Men finding it, at first, impossible to subsist of themselves, and by the immediate Product of their own Labours, were constrained to have recourse to one another, to supply their Wants: They carried what they had the greatest Plenty of, and best could spare, to purchase what they needed most, at another's Hands; who gave them what they came for, in Consideration of what they brought, if he found it valuable with others, or useful to himself.

This was, it is agreed, the Way Men took at first, in the Infancy of Time and Trade, to furnish themselves with the Necessaries, and some of the Conveniencies of Life, by bartering and exchanging one Commodity for another.

But this was found to be very inconvenient, upon the Account of its being difficult to agree upon the Price and Value of what each had in his Possession; and the Trouble of carrying and transporting Goods and Cattle from Place to Place, and losing oftentimes their Pains and Labour, by reason that no one wanted what they brought, nor would exchange, unless they would part with it to their great Loss. And therefore, to prevent these Inconveniencies, it was agreed upon (we know not when, nor how, exactly) that something should be used in common by them all, with which they should be able to purchase every Thing they wanted, from another;



and by which they might rate and value all Things that they had themselves: To set up (in a word) some one particular Thing, to be the common Measure of the Worth and Price of every Thing besides: And this was to be something that was *portable*, for Ease and Convenience; something *durable*, that it might not by constant Use wear soon away; and something not over-scarce, nor over-common; and something, lastly, that was *beautiful*. All these Qualities concurring in Metals, such as Brass and Copper, Silver and Gold, they were each of them pitched upon, by several Nations, according to the Plenty, or the Scarcity they had of them, to serve to all the above-named Purposes: And this great Thing that was to counter-balance (and as the Preacher says it does, *Eccl. x. 19.*) to answer all things else, was what we now call *Money*.

How long this Thing has been in Practice in the World, is of no great Use to enquire; the mention of it in the Text, is older than we can find in any Book besides, by at least seven hundred Years, and yet there is no doubt but Money was used before the Days of *Abraham*. But what is to our purpose to observe, is, That it was valued both by the Buyer and Seller, according to its *Weight*; and all the Money that was received, was first weighed, as being the only Means to remedy the former Inconveniences; for by this, a Man was sure that he received so much Money as he rated his Goods at, and with which he might purchase as much of what he wanted, as he could have had in Exchange for his Goods, without the Trouble and Hazard of carrying them up and down. For Money is the common Pawn or Pledge, that one Man takes, in hopes of parting with it to another, for what he wants, whenever he sees fit. But this could never be, unless its *Weight* were certain and determined. It is therefore sure, that *Weight* is Men's Security, and the true intrinsic Worth of Money.

But because it was too troublesome, and took up too much Time, to carry Scales, and weigh whatever they received, Men found it convenient to have a *Stamp* or *Mark* set upon every Piece, to signify its Weight and Value; by which Men knew what they received or paid away, with little or no Trouble.

Yet something still was wanting to secure the Truth of Payments: Men might be fraudulent and false, and bring their Money, truly marked and stamped, and of a just Weight, but of somewhat a baser Metal, and more Alloy than it should truly be; by which a Trader should receive as much for Quantity and Denomination as he ought, but not of equal Fineness and Goodness with the current Coin. To guard Men therefore against all these Mischiefs, and to keep them from doing and receiving Injuries, and from imposing upon one another, and to secure Trade, it was judged absolutely necessary to intrust the Kings and Governors of Nations with the Care and Charge of Coining all the publick Money. For who are so fit as they, who are presumed to be the Fathers of their People, the Men of greatest Honour and Integrity, who are the most concerned, and have the most to win or lose, and who are appointed and set up by God and Man, for no other End and Purpose than to consult, procure, and conserve the general Good of their respective People? Who are so fit as they to have this Charge committed to them, that is of such Importance; and so universal a Concern? So that now we have the publick Faith and Conscience, Interest and Honour, all engaged to secure to the Receiver the Weight and Fineness of every single Piece of Money. The *Heads* of Princes are not only stamped for Ornament and Honour, and to declare who are and have been Governors of such a Nation, but publickly to vouch the true intrinsic Worth of every Piece, and tell Men that they there receive so much Silver, and of such a Fineness, and that that Image warrants it: And for this Cause it has been always highly penal to counterfeit the publick Stamp, and to coin Money, though of equal Weight and Goodness with the King's: Not that any great Evil is hereby done to any Man, but that if this were indulged to private People, the World would fall again into Distrust and Fear, into Suspicion and Uncertainty about their Money, and return anew to weighing and trying all they took.

This



This is the short Account and History of Money. Necessity (which grows continually, and will do so to the World's End) first introduced the Use of it; and it could not be useful but by being the common Standard and Measure of the Price and Worth of every Thing besides; and it could not be this, but by being of such a certain and determined Weight and Fineness; and of this we could not be secure, without much Pains and Trouble, but by entrusting the Coinage of it to Kings, and such as they commisionate and appoint, to see that the Commonwealth receive no Damage.

II. We are now, in the *Second Place*, to see the Mischiefs of corrupting and debasing Money, the coining bad Metal, and the clipping and stealing from good.

The coining even of good Metal and full Weight, is (we have seen above) of ill Example, and of ill Consequence, when done by private People, and without Authority, because it lays the Way open to Deceit and Fraud, and takes away the Trust and Security Men have in the Prince's faithful and honest dealing with them, and brings them again to a State of Jealousy and Caution each of one another. But, to be sure, the coining of bad Metal must be mischievous: Just so much Mischief and Injury must needs be done to every individual Man that takes it, as there is wanting of the usual Weight and Fineness in each single Piece. Suppose, for Instance, Men should mix one third of baser Metal with their Silver, and put it off for good and true, and such as it pretends to be; it is manifest, that every one receiving such a Piece would be imposed upon, and lose one third of what he ought to have: For the publick Faith engages, that every Man receiving a Piece of such a Mark and Denomination, shall receive in it so much Silver and of such a Fineness; and here a Man receives but *twenty* Pence for Half a Crown, whose Stamp proclaims it is to go for *thirty*. The Case indeed is not so well as I put it, for they who coin false Money, give us neither a fifth nor sixth part of good Silver; and all that is wanting is so much Cheat and real Injury: So that that impudent Demand of *who is hereby wronged?* can find no Place; for every one is wronged that takes this Money, and every one is actually a Loser, more or less, by reason it quickly stops, and is not current: Here every body sees and feels the Injury; and if it falls upon the poor and labouring Man, he loses, it may be, his Day's Work, and the Family its Subsistence and Provision: But I put the Case so fair, that I may not multiply Particulars, but join the Clipping of good Money with the Coining of bad, and mixing baser Metal with Silver: For if Half a Crown be clipped to *twenty* Pence, it is equal to Half a Crown not clipped, that has but *twenty* Pence of Silver in it; and the Injury to private People is the same; and therefore I consider them as one and the same Offence, in that they both alike defraud the Receiver of what is his due; for there the Injustice lies: That is the Sin at the Bottom; there is so much stolen from every Man, as there is less given him than he should receive.

And this administers occasion to People, either Strangers or Natives, to cheat us even with true Silver; for they may secretly coin us (as it is probable they do) a great deal of true Silver, but not of full Weight, and putting it off under the shelter of clipped Money, do gain thereby at least one third. Now no one gains but what another loses in such Bargains. By this the Foreigners (that are but dextrous and will venture) have opportunity of purchasing what Commodities they please, and paying us with little Money, for which they must otherwise (were there no Money clipped) give us good Silver, and full Weight, either of theirs, or our own Coin.

Thus Clipping lays us open to the Cheats and Injuries of all the World, as well as of our own People. I do not say that Strangers *do*, but that they *may* improve the Villany and Injustice of our own Clippers, to their own Advantage, and to our farther Mischief; and it is a Wonder if they do not: For it is not very likely that one Nation should raise the Value of its Money above its true intrinsic Worth (which is indeed its Weight and  
Fine-



Fineness) but that its Neighbours will have some Advantage by it, by importing Money of the like Weight with that which goes current. Now the passing of Money clipped, for Money of just Weight, is, in effect and truth, raising our Money, and making that to go for *Thirty* Pence, which is indeed but worth *Twenty*. And therefore there is, at least, some hazard of Foreigners coining and importing Money of equal Weight and Fineness with our own, which cannot possibly be done, without our great prejudice: Now this could never come to pass without our clipping, for that alone it is that gives them opportunity; that is the Handle they may take their hold of: And if we do not see Money of this kind pass commonly about, it is no Argument that there is none imported from Abroad, nor coined at Home; for a little Art is sufficient (they say) to cover that Deceit, and make it pass for old.

Well, but the Money passes still for good and current Coin, and where is then the Mischief? a little Shilling buys as much as a great one, and the Name and Character of Pieces are as good a Standard and Measure of the Price and Worth of all things else, as if they were full Weight, and answered to their Name and Character; and therefore where is the Offence and Injury? Who is hereby wronged? This indeed is the last Resort of all the Patrons of this Practice; the Refuge to which the Guilty fly themselves, and the Consideration that stirs the People's Pity at their Sufferings; they think that hereby none is injured; but this is a Mistake, for every one is injured more or less by Clipping. The Merchant that exports less Goods from Home, than he imports from abroad, must unavoidably discharge the Over-balance with good Money; this he can never do with clipped, for it is not *Cæsar's Face* and *Titles*, but *Weight* and *Goodness* that procure Credit: And if a Foreigner Import more of his Country Goods than he carries away of ours, the Over-balance must be paid in weighty Money, for the clipped will not go abroad: Now, if the Exportation of our weighty Money (which is only now the *milled*) be a Mischief to the Nation, we see it is occasioned chiefly by the clipping: for if the old were of the same due Weight with the new (as it is before these Thieves steal from it) the new and old would be exported alike; and then the Complaint would only be of the Exportation of Money in general; which whether it be good or evil to a Nation, I have nothing to say: Only one cannot help seeing, that as there is *Law* on one side, so there is unavoidable *Necessity* on the other, if we import more foreign Goods than we carry out of our own Kingdom. I am only concerned to say, that if exporting our new Money be a Mischief, it is owing especially to the clipping of the old; and that therefore clipping is injurious. And if we do not give these Foreigners our weighty Money in Exchange for their Commodities, because we cannot get it, yet we must give them Goods proportionably more or better; they will not be Losers by our clipping: They will either contract for Money of full Weight (if they be to carry Money home, or to another trading Country) or for proportionable Allowance, in the Goods they take for what they bring. And what is the Consequence of a Merchant's paying more for what he buys of a Foreigner, but that he will ask a better Price of the Retailer? And the Consequence of that must needs be, that every one that buys must make amends for the Defect of clipped Money. And thus the Injury is universal; all that consume Commodities of foreign Growth or Make, are affected more or less by this first Injury; but because the Mischief is so general, and diffused, and at such distance and remove, Men either think not at all, or but slightly of it.

An Instance, it may be, will make the Matter plain to every one. Suppose then that a Foreigner import (and it is the same Thing as if we fetched) from abroad, Goods to the Value of thirty thousand Pounds; but it is Silver only, and not Goods, that he will have in Exchange for what he brings: You are therefore sure, that he means not thirty thousand Pounds in clipped Money, for that he sees is no more worth than twenty;



ty; and you may call it how, or what you please, at home, but it is not, as the Text expressees it, *money currant with the merchant*; i. e. with one that trades abroad, unless it be of full Weight. The Commerce therefore is at an end, unless you can procure him full Money; which being impossible, (we may well enough suppose it so, for so it will shortly be, without all peradventure) it must be made up of the clipped, and then he receives what is but as *Thirty* to him, but it may be very near *Forty* from us. And who must make up this, but we that buy these Goods at second, or third, or farther hand? The Merchant will not sell that for *Thirty* which cost him *Forty*, we may be sure; and therefore it is evident, to a Demonstration, That every one pays proportionably more for what he buys, by reason of clipping, and therefore every one is cheated by it, and cheated constantly, although he mind not the Particulars.

This Evil is indeed avoided, where Foreigners will take our clipped Money, in assurance of putting it off again, for Goods they want to carry Home; but it is only avoided for the present; the Nation will unquestionably feel it, e'er long, to their great smart; the Punishment is indeed deferred, but every one knows that that is no Acquittance.

Suppose a little farther, that a Company of ill-designing People should buy up all the Plate in *London*, and pay for it in clipped Money; the Goldsmiths will by these Means give more away than they receive, by at least one third of *Sterling* Silver. This opens the way to their prodigious Loss; for if the Money should be called in then, (and why not then, as well as any time after or besides?) they must undoubtedly be Losers so much by it; and why should any Body of Men be so exposed to Ruin, by such Villany? Well, but they are content to traffick at this rate; yes, and so must every one besides, by a strong Necessity; but it is still in Hopes that they shall pass away what they receive, at the same Price: But will not this Hope perish some time or other? Yes, unquestionably; but because we know not when, we do not value it.

But is not Clipping, notwithstanding this Uncertainty of Time, an Injury and Piece of Theft? Because we do not feel at present, do we never fear a Mischief for the future? We think not so weakly in any other Case. What makes Men plant, in their Estates, the Trees, they know that they shall never reap the Fruits of? What makes them build the Houses, that will last for many Generations after they are dead and gone, but the Care and Concern they have for their Posterity, that it may be well with their Children, and with their Childrens Children after them? We see Men guard, in all their Contracts, as much against Evils to come, as those that are present, or near at hand. If a Man should undermine our House, we should not be content and easy, although the Men of Skill should assure us, it would last and stand our Time, with all Security; we should be fearful that it might not do so; or if it should, we should be careful for our Children.

Whoever lays the Foundation of our Misery, does then begin to make us miserable, though we may not feel it for some time after. So when we decline towards old Age, we often find ourselves pained and diseased, with the Strains that happened in Youth, and vigorous Exercises, which then were over-looked and quite neglected. No one can tell exactly when this Mischief will break out, and what the Effects will be; but let them be as kind as they can, they will be very heavy to the Nation. When once the Suspicion of calling in this Money shall appear, there will unavoidably be a sudden Stop of Trade, among Retailers, for some time; for no one will receive what he is sure to lose by; and this, though it be short, will yet be hard and grievous to mean People, and such as live by the Day, who will not know how to find themselves and Families with Necessaries for some Space of Time, till Money get into its old Current.



This Mischief may appear short and inconsiderable; but be it so, what is the Good that counter-balances it? What need is there of *any* Mischief? Why should these Villains hazard the Distress and Misery of poor and labouring People, though it were but for a Week? The common People then, will see and feel the Injury and Mischief that is done by Clipping, which now they cannot understand, or will not well consider. They will find that the little Money they then have, will not go for more than its just Weight; and be convinced by Hunger and Thirst, that Clippers are as truly Thieves and Robbers, as those they find upon the Highways, or breaking up their Houses, and do as well deserve their Chains and Halts.

And who can tell whether every single Person must not bear his own Burthen, and stand to the Loss of all that is wanting of due Weight, of all the Money he is Master of? And if he must, the Cry will be like that of *Egypt*, loud and universal, for every Family will be a Loser: But it will fall severest on the Poor, who from a little can spare none.

One of our Historians [*W. Hemingford, Anno 1180.*] tells us, that in *Henry the II's* Time, the Money of the Kingdom was so corrupt, that it was fain to be changed and called in: It was indeed necessary, but it fell exceeding hard upon the Poor and Country-People. So it was also in the Time of *Henry the III* upon calling in the old and clipped Money [*M. Paris, Anno 1248.*] by Proclamation, the People were more distressed than if Corn had been at half a Crown a Bushel (which was then, I believe, equal to *twelve* or *fourteen* Shillings now) for the new Money was not yet come to their great Towns; and when it was, they received no more new, than their old came to by Weight; paying also, over and above, *thirteen* Pence in the Pound for Coinage; so that besides the Loss of Time, and the great Charge they were at, to come to the several Places of Exchange, they were sent away with hardly *twenty* Shillings, for every *thirty* that they brought along with them. *Arctabatur Populus non mediocriter damnificatus.* The People were straitned, and received no small Damage; they lost, you see, one *third*. The Poor still suffered most, and so it will always be; for a small Weight is heavy to the weak and faint; and a little Loss grievous to such as have but little.

Neither, *lastly*, is the Evil far removed, although the Publick bear the Loss, for every Man is Part and Parcel of the Publick.

And if the *Mint* receive the little Money in, and deliver out good and full, yet must it needs be that these Particulars must fill the *Exchequer*, in return for what they have received of new Money. That is, a general Tax must answer for the Robberies of these Villains; the good and innocent, the careful and industrious People, must contribute to the making up the Loss the Publick sustains by the Injustice and Theft of Clippers. And how soon this will be, no one can tell; but by the haste that is made to make it necessary, it cannot well be far off.

I have spoken exceeding modestly and moderately, when I supposed we were only cheated of one *third*. I did it to make the Case plain; for every one sees, that near to *half* is taken away, which opens the Passage to a Suspicion, that *Covetousness* as well as *Luxury*, is at the Bottom, in the Crime of Clipping; and that some People will grow Rich thereby, as well as others feed their Vices and Necessities: For it does not seem very probable that so much Money should be spent by those poor and mean Wretches, who are commonly discovered to live by this unjust and wicked Practice: The Sum is much too big for them; and one cannot well account, how almost all the old Silver that circles round the Nation, should come into these Clippers Hands in the Compass of a few Years.

But with this I have little to do. It is enough to answer my Design and Purpose, if I have shewn you with any Clearness, the Mischiefs of corrupting and debasing Money,



ney, the coining bad Metal, and the clipping and stealing from good; for then the Way is open to the Justification of the Laws that are made to punish such Offenders: which was the *Third* and last Particular.

III. Nothing can justify the Severity of legal Punishments, but their Necessity; and nothing evidences this Necessity, like the Sight and Knowledge of those Evils and Mischiefs the Laws design to prevent as well as punish: And therefore the laying open the Injuries and Mischiefs of Clipping and Coining, is the readiest Way to clear the Reason and Justice of such Laws, as doom to Death such Malefactors.

This I have been already trying to do; and though there is no doubt, but the Men of Skill and Experience in Trade and Money-matters, can see more Mischiefs than I mention, rising from these Practices, yet certainly *these* mentioned are sufficient to acquit our Laws from being cruel or unjust. For what can Laws do less, than secure the Honour of the Nation (which is much concerned in the Goodness and Weight of its current Coin) with respect to Foreigners, and just and righteous Dealing with one another at home? And if nothing less than Death will serve to these good Ends, then putting Men to Death for Clipping and Coining is neither cruel nor unjust. And though more Pity usually attends these Criminals than others, yet the Laws have not therefore less of Reason and Equity, that condemn them; nor is their Fault less heinous in its self, or mischievous to others. But our Pity arises from hence, That we see Men going to suffer Death for a Crime, by which we know of none that are undone, or greatly injured; the Evil is unfixed and undetermined, and we cannot put ourselves into their Condition who are hurt by these Offenders, as we can and do in other Cases, which excites our Indignation. Thus when a Thief breaks in upon a House and steals, we are immediately sensible both of the Fright and Injury which a particular Person feels; and the Concern we have for him and his Family, that may be undone by the Robbery, counter-balances our Pity for the Criminal. *Self* is more nearly touched, for this may be the Case of every honest Man, and therefore Fear for our Selves and Families, as in danger of being ruined by the like Villany, outweighs our Pity to a Felon. But in the Case of false Coinage or Clipping, we think immediately only of a Damage to the *Treasury*, which we esteem above our Pity: Or we conceive a Damage publick and general, which excites no pitiful Resentments in us, because we have our Eye on no particular Man as ruined or undone thereby.

But the Remembrance of what hath been abovesaid, of the Mischiefs that are truly done, both to the Publick, and to almost all Particulars, will change this ill-placed and mistaken Pity, and transfer it to those, that suffer Want and Misery by these ill Practices, although we do not know them in particular; for it is impossible that so much Mischief should be done, but some or other must suffer by it.

But to shew you that our Laws are neither cruel nor unjust in this Affair, it is sufficient to say, that they agree with the Laws of almost all Nations, which seldom do conspire in bloody and inhuman Executions.

The *Romans* considered this Crime of Clipping and Coining, generally speaking, as *High-Treason*:<sup>a</sup> They made exact Enquiries after these Offenders: They tortured Men to confess their Accomplices: They allowed Rewards and Privileges to such as would impeach

*L. II. 9. Th. Cod. Tit. 21. Constantinus ad Januarius.*

<sup>a</sup> Quoniam nonnulli Monetarii adulterina moneta, clandestinis sceleribus exercent, cuncti cognoscant, necessitatem sibi incumbere hujusmodi homines inquirendi, ut investigati tradantur Judiciis, facti conscios per tormenta illico prodituri, ac sic dignis suppliciis addicendi. 2. Accusatoribus etiam eorum immunitatem permittimus; cujus modus, quoniam dispar census est, a Nobis per singulos statuatur. Servos etiam qui hoc detulerint, Civitate Romanâ donamus, ut eorum domini precium à Fisco percipiant. 3. Si quis autem Militum hujusmodi Personam susceptam, de custodia exire fecerit, Capite puniatur. 4. Appellandi etiam privato licentia denegetur, si vero Miles aut Promotus hujusmodi crimen incurrit, super ejus nomine & gradu ad nos referatur. 5. Si dominum fundi vel domus conscium esse probabitur, deportari eum in insulam oportebit, cunctis



impeach; if they were Slaves, they were set at Liberty, and the Exchequier paid their Ransom to their Masters: If one of these Offenders escaped out of Custody, his Keeper, if privy to it, certainly died for him: If the Master or Owner of the House or Place where such Offence was committed, were conscious to the Thing, although not actually employed himself, he forfeited his House, Goods, and Estate, and was himself transported; and if he knew nothing of the Matter, yet he forfeited his House, unless he made himself the first discovery to the Magistrate (to oblige them, I suppose, to greater Caution whom they trusted in their Houses.) All Servants, Helpers, and Assistants, were also condemned to die, as well as the principal Agent: And the Death they often underwent, was being burnt. And yet the *Romans*<sup>b</sup> were as sparing of Blood, and as merciful in their Executions as any Nation whatever.

The Laws of the *Wifigoths*<sup>c</sup> punished these Kind of Offenders, if they were Slaves, with the Loss of their Right Hand; if they were Freemen, with the Loss of half their Estates, and being made Slaves to whom the King pleased.

The Laws of our own Country in King *Athelstan's*<sup>d</sup> Time, punished them (as above) with the cutting off their Right Hand, and fixing them over the Place where they committed the Offence. In King *Ethelred's* Days they were to undergo the *Treble Ordeal* (*i. e.* to carry a red-hot Iron of three Pound Weight in their Hands such a determined space of Ground) and if they miscarried there, they were to die. In *Henry the Ist's* Time they were condemned to lose, some their Hands, and some their Eyes:

cunctis ejus rebus protinus confiscandis: Si vero eo ignaro crimen commissum est, possessionem aut domum debet amittere in qua id scelus admissum est. Actor fundi, vel servus, vel Incola, vel Colonus qui hoc ministerium præbuit cum eo qui fecit, supplicio capitali plectetur, nihilominus fundo, vel domo fisci viribus vindicanda. 6. Quod si Dominus ante ignorans, ut primum repperit, scelus prodidit perpetratum, minime possessio vel Domus ipsius proscriptionis injuriæ subiacebit: Sed auctorem ac ministrum poena Capitalis excipiet. *Dat. 12. Kal. Decemb. Rom. Crispo. 2. & Constantino. 2. CC. Coff. [321.]*

*L. I. Cod. Th. Tit. 22. Imp. Constantinus, Leontio, P. P.*

<sup>b</sup> Omnes Solidi in quibus nostri vultus ac veneratio una est, uno pretio æstimandi sunt atque vendendi, quanquam diversa formæ mensura sit: Nec enim qui majore habitu faciei extenditur, majoris est pretii; aut qui angustiore expressione concluditur, minoris haberi credendus est, cum pondus idem existat. Quod si quis aliter fecerit, aut capite puniri debet, aut flammis tradi, aut alia poena mortifera. Quod ille etiam patietur, qui mensuram Circuli exterioris adraferit, ut ponderis minuat quantitatem: Vel figuratum solidum adultera imitatione in vendendo subjecerit. *Dat. 7. Kal. Aug. Gallicano & Basso Coff. [317.]*

<sup>c</sup> *Rerum Hispanic. Tom. III. Pag. 957.*

<sup>d</sup> Si monetarius reus fuerit, amputetur ei manus, & ponatur super monetæ fabricam. Si inculpatio sit, & se purgare velit, eat ad Ferrum calidum, & adlegiet manum ad Canfaram (candens ferrum) quod non falsum fecit. Si in Ordalio reus fuerit, fiat ei quod supradictum est. *Leg. Athelstani, R. Jo. Brompton. p. 843.*

Et omnis Monetarius qui accusabitur quod falsum fecit, postquam interdictum fuit, adeat *Triplex Ordaliū*, & si culpabilis sit, occidatur. *Leg. Ethelredi, R. 11, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. p. 898.*

De correctione Pecuniæ, ut una moneta per totas has nationes sine omni falso teneatur, & nemo repudiet eam. Et qui posthac falsabit manum, perdat unde fecerit; & nec argento, aut auro, vel ullo modo redimatur. Si præpositus accusetur quod ejus licentia quis falsum fecerit, purget se triplici lada; quod si purgationem frugerit, inde judicium habeat quod qui falsum composuit. *Leg. Canuti, R. 30. p. 923.*

Quicumque falsam Monetam, se sciente fecerit, aut studiose expenderit, tanquam Maledictus, & Pauperum Oppressor, & Turbator Civitatis à Fidelium Consortio separetur. *Concil. Roman. A. D. 1123.*

Monetam quoque corruptam & falsam sub tanta animadversione corrigi statuit, ut nullus qui posset deprehendi falsos denarios facere, aliqua redemptione, quin Oculos, & inferiores Corporis partes perderet, juvari valeret. *Simeon Dunelm. A. 1108.*

*Joh. Brompton (p. 1000.) places it in Anno 1103. and says they were to lose both their Eyes; so does H. de Knyghton. 2377.*

*Chron. Saxon. An. 1125.*

<sup>e</sup> Hoc anno, misit Rex (*Hen. I.*) ante Christi Festum, de *Normannia* in *Anglorum Terram*, & jussit omnes Monetarios qui erant in Anglia, privari membris; scilicet quemque dextra manu, & testiculis; quod factum est, quoniam qui habuit Libram, non potuit ullam rem mercari uno istius denario, in quovis foro. Tunc *Rogerus* Episcopus *Sarisburyensis* misit per totam *Angliam*, & jussit eos omnes interesse *Wintoniæ* ad Christi Festum. Cum eo pervenissent, sevocati fuerunt sigillatim, & præcissa erat cuique dextra manus ac testiculi. Totum hoc factum est intra duodecim festi *Natalium* dies, & quidem jure Optimo, quippe damnum maximum intulissent toti genti tantam vim metalli vitiosi coemendo.



Eyes: And some (in Allusion to the Word) who were found to *adulterate* the King's Coin, were so punished as if the Laws intended to prevent *Adultery* it self: As appears in our Histories of those Times<sup>f</sup>. These Punishments were after changed into the Modern Executions<sup>g</sup>, and have so continued ever since, although it is probable that Punishments of *greater Pain* and *constant Shame*, such as they heretofore were, would secure us better, than putting Men to a short and easy Death.

Thus much I think may suffice to vindicate our Laws from the Reproach of being cruel or unjust; and (if Men will but well consider) to wean them from that soft pernicious Tenderneſs, that sometimes certainly restrains the Hand of Justice, slackens the Care and Vigilance of Magistrates, keeps back the Under-Officers, corrupts the Juries (for Passions and Affections bribe as well as Gifts) and with-holds the Evidence, both from appearing and from speaking out, when they appear. These are the ill Effects of a weak and undue Compassion, shewn especially to these Kind of Offenders, which help (it is more than likely) to increase their Number, and the Misery of honest People, and therefore should be better thought upon by such as are so concerned.

And now, if I have shewn you (as I thought to do) that this Offence is fruitful of Mischiefs; that it dishonours the Kingdom, and does apparently damnify every particular Man, and will do more and more so, and fall at last with a most deadly Weight somewhere or other, and, to be sure, with greater Violence on the Poor and Mean, who are least able to endure it; if this be manifest, our Laws and Executions are not only cleared from all their Imputations, but I have also found out, for these Wretches, a sufficient Ground and Bottom for *Repentance*, which they, it seems, are generally ignorant of: They can see they have offended against the Laws and Statutes of the Kingdom, and can acknowledge that their other Sins and Offences have betrayed them to these Practices, but they cannot see the Justice of those Laws, nor the Wickedness of these Practices: They can be sorry for their great Misfortune, but they know not how to repent of Clipping and Coining, as Sins against God or their Neighbour; and therefore however guilty they may be in other respects, yet the Sense of these Offences affects them little or nothing. All this pretended Innocence depends (as I have shewn) on this Mistake, that *No One is injured hereby*; and they presume that no one is injured, because they design the Injury of no particular one, nor know of any that is injured by it: The Evil that is done is unfixed and undetermined to Time, or Place, or Person, and therefore they conclude that none is truly done. If these were not their private Conceits, why should not they conclude themselves as guilty of Theft and Fraud, and

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of

*Matth. Paris. A. 1248. H. 3.*

<sup>f</sup> *Ipsis quoque diebus Moneta Angliæ, per detestabiles Tonsores & Falsarios adeò intolerabiliter est corrupta, quod non Indigenæ vel etiam Alienigenæ eam Oculo recto, vel illæso corde poterant intueri. Circumcidebatur enim fere usque ad interiorem circulum, limbo literato totaliter vel deleto, vel enormiter deturpato. Præceptum est igitur voce Præconiâ, in Civitatibus, Burgis, Nundinis & Foris, ex parte D. Regis [H. 3.] nequis denarius nisi legitimi ponderis, & circularis formæ acciperetur, nec quoque modo a vendente vel emente vel commutante acceptaretur, punirenturque hujusmodi præcepti transgressores. Adhibita est etiam diligentia, ut memorati falsarii invenirentur, ut de tanto scelere convicti, condignâ pœna judicialiter punirentur. Facta igitur diligentissima inquisitione, inventi sunt in hoc facinore culpabiles Judæi, Causini infames, & quidam Mercatores lanarum Flandrenses. Jussit etiam D. Rex Francorum omnes tales in Regno suo compertos patibulis laqueatos vento præsentari.*

*There is something remarkable in this Passage, namely, that it was made Penal for any one to take or receive any clipped Money; which, if we had observed some Years ago, we had not been in the deplorable Condition we are now in, in that respect.*

*Hen. Knyghton. p. 2463. A. 1282. Ed. I.*

<sup>g</sup> *Rex tenuit Parliamentum suum Londoniis, & fecit mutare monetam Regni, quæ illo tempore fuit viliter retonsa, & abbreviata, unde Populus Regni graviter conquerebatur, & Rex veritatem inde inquirens, & veritatem comperiens, trecentos & plures, de illo delicto & feloniam publicè convicit, quorum quidam fuerunt suspensi, quidam distracti & suspensi, secundum delicti qualitatem & quantitatem.*



of Injustice, as much as any other Robbers, and consequently repent as thoroughly and sincerely of them? But it will not follow, that because a Man either forgets or knows not whom he has injured, that he has therefore injured none, nor needs to repent or make amends. For if a Man should, in the Course of his Calling, set aside the Fear of God, and all Regard to Honesty and Justice, and make his Advantage of People's Ignorance and Simplicity, their Easiness, or Want of Understanding, and cheat them all he could, without intending to cheat any one Particular more than another, it will not follow that he has cheated none, because he intended to cheat no Particular; nor will it follow that he has cheated no more than he remembers to have cheated; nor will it follow that he is obliged to repent of no more Injustice than he can call to mind done to Particulars; nor will it follow that he is not obliged to Restitution and Amendment, because he has cheated more than he remembers. The Man knows very well that he designed his own Advantage all the while, and had no Consideration of the Means; and knows that a great deal of Wrong must needs be done, and that he did it; and knows that a great deal of Wrong calls for a great deal of Sorrow, and a great deal of Satisfaction. And this is certainly the Coiners and the Clippers Case, which requires as full and true Repentance as any other Robbery whatsoever, in as much as it is equal to any Theft of the same Value, with respect to private People, and with respect to the Publick much above it.

And what is said of these as Principals, is also true in its Proportion of all that are Accessaries; all that are any Ways concerned in this Affair, such as knowingly provide or make their proper Instruments; such as go up and down, whether in City or Country, to procure broad Money; such as sell these People broad Money for great Gain, which cannot possibly be done without a strong Suspicion of the Purchaser; and such as are employed to vend and put off these Pieces so corrupted and debased; and lastly, such as easily receive and purchase the Clippings and Filings of Silver, at the Hands of justly-to-be suspected Sellers. I know not how they can (any of them) acquit themselves (not to the Laws and Statutes of the Kingdom only, but) to God above, and to their own Consciences, who are in any sort Partakers with these Robbers of the Publick.

And upon this Account, a Discourse of this Nature may be (I hope) in this Place, as justifiable, as any one else upon the *Eighth Commandment*: And I will believe I speak to Magistrates, not only careful of the Dignity and Honour of our Laws, but of the Welfare and Security of innocent and honest People: And who will therefore take what care they can, to bring to Light, and Punishment, these Offenders. And if there appears but little of Christianity in such Sermons, it will be to such as consider not how great a Part, Justice and Honesty, and fair and righteous Dealing make up of this Divine Religion; and how great Care the Doctrines of the Gospel take, not only of Men's Souls in the World to come, but of the Good and Welfare of their Bodies here. An honest Man and a good Christian will never be two distinct Things in a Christian Kingdom; for the chief Design of our Religion is to make us good and honest Men in this World, and to propose Rewards to such as will be so, in the World to come. And therefore, if I have convinced any one of the Fraud and Villany, the Injustice and the Theft of Coining and Clipping, and thereby shall deter them from entering on, or persisting in those evil Practices, or shall reclaim them from them, and occasion their Repentance and Amendment, I shall make no doubt of having served the Interest and Design of *Christianity*, in a great many Particulars. And in this Hope I will end this *Sermon*, leaving it to the *Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: To whom be all Honour, and Glory, now and for ever.*



## S E R M O N

Of the Education of CHILDREN:

Preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at Guild-Hall Chapel, on Sunday, November 1. 1696.

To the Inhabitants of the United Parishes of  
St. AUSTIN and St. FAITH.

**H**AVING frequently intended with my self, something of this Nature for your particular Use and Service, to whom, you know, I am more immediately related; it was the easier to me, to comply with their Desires who were willing to have this Discourse published; because I knew I should thereby satisfy in part my own Intentions and Design of doing you good in this Instance; and therefore though it be now Common, yet I desire you earnestly to make it more particularly Yours, by a close Application of it to your selves.

I cannot tell how a Minister can promise himself any Success in his Endeavours, if the Parents will not believe themselves obliged (as certainly they are by God's Commands) to educate their Children well, and bring them up in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord; and by their Care at home in private, fit them for those farther Instructions they are to receive in publick, at the appointed Opportunities. They are to sow the Seeds of Christ's Religion in the Children's Minds, and He must wisely cultivate, improve, and nourish them; They are to lay the first Foundations in their Hearts, and He must build thereon, as God enables him.

That this might not be a Work of Difficulty, either to Parents or to Children, nor either of them left at an Uncertainty, the one of Teaching the other of Learning what they ought, the Church, in her great Wisdom, hath collected in her Catechism a short, but full and comprehensive Summary of whatsoever a Christian is to believe and practise to his Soul's Health, which all her Children are to learn, remember, and consider, according to their Age and Understanding. This is delivered in so clear a Method, in Words and Sense so easy and intelligible, that it is not above a very mean Capacity; and yet the Matter is so solid and substantial, that it is fit for the strongest Understanding; the oldest Christian in the World need know no more, than what he is to learn there in his Youth, though he will know it better and more fully, the longer he considers it; so that the Parent, whilst he is instructing the Children in it, will be himself a gainful Learner; more and more edified, and grow continually in the Knowledge of his Faith and Duty.

The Neglect of this prescribed Course, has been one great Occasion, I believe, of that wide Difference there appears of private People's Judgments and Opinions in Matters of Religion; they have taken in different Principles in their Youth, and therefore as their Age advanced, have drawn different Conclusions from them, the Effects of which have been exceedingly mischievous. I do therefore advise and desire you all to teach your Children this judicious, sound, and truly Christian Catechism, that savours nothing of a Party or private Spirit, but is what they may, and must depend upon to their Lives-end.

When



*When this good Ground-work is well laid, you may with much more Ease, form and fashion them to Virtue and Religion, by putting them in Mind of the Covenant they have made with God in Baptism, by which they stand obliged to give themselves entirely up to Christ; to look upon him as their only Lord and Lawgiver, their Saviour and their Judge; to believe whatever he reveals, and to fulfil whatever he commands. There also you will find the two Tables that contain their Duty towards God, and towards their Neighbour, and both of them explained with the clearest Brevity that can be found; from whence you are to take occasion of exciting them to a most diligent Performance of them; as also to rebuke and punish the Neglect or the Transgression of them. There also they will learn the Lord's-Prayer, the Prayer that Christ himself, the Son of God, (who knew the Father's Will, and Man's Necessities, the best of all Men living) taught his Followers to use; and therefore it is such, you may be sure, as is best fitted for our Purpose, and such as is, both for the Matter and the Manner, acceptable to God the Father. After this follows a short, but full Account of the two Sacraments, of Baptism, and the Lord's-Supper; by which they learn the Manner how they themselves (and all true Christians ever since our Saviour's Institution of it) were initiated into Christ's Religion, namely, by being baptized in Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to Christ's Command, explained by the universal Practice of the Church; insomuch that they who have at any Time denied or refused the Matter and the Form of this Sacrament, have not been accounted Christians. Here they see also what is signified by being thus baptized in Water, namely, the dying unto Sin, and living a-new to Righteousness, i. e. the repenting of, and forsaking all their past Sins, and living for the Time to come, a righteous and a holy Life; which is also the Meaning of becoming a New Man, a New Creature, a Regenerate Person, and the like; all which is engaged for by every one at his Baptism, and is to be remembred and performed for ever after. Here, lastly, they will come to see the End of the Institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, the Cause and Purpose of its being ordained, namely, For the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the Benefits which we receive thereby, i. e. to put them constantly in Mind, that Christ the Lord was crucified upon the Cross; that this his Death was an attoning, expiatory Sacrifice, and accepted by God as such; that for its Sake and Merit his Anger is appeased, he is now reconcileable to all that will repent them of their Sins, and forsake them, and obey the Gospel; he will forgive them the Penalty they had incurred, and will moreover crown them in the World to come with everlasting Happiness. The Remembrance of this salutary Death and Sacrifice, and the great Benefits derived to us from and by it, is the End of this Sacrament's being instituted by Christ: And therefore to answer the End of this Institution, they must come to the Sacrament; and when they come, the Bread broken is to remind them of the Body of Christ, torn and suffering on the Cross, and the Wine poured out is to remind them of the Blood of Christ that was there shed; and then they are to call to mind the inexpressible Benefits of this Death, the Pardon and Forgiveness of all the Sins which they repent of and forsake; the Hope and good Assurance of which Pardon, and Peace, and God's Favour, is as much the Life, the Strength and Comfort of the Soul, as Bread and Wine are the Support and Comfort of the Body.*

*Upon this Knowledge of the End of the Institution, and of the Benefits that we receive by Christ's Death, it remains only that the young ones be acquainted with the Preparation that is necessary to their coming to the Lord's-Supper; which they will find in the Answer to the last Question of the Catechism, which contains the whole of what they are to do. They are to examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former Sins; whether they stedfastly purpose to lead a new and better Life for the Time to come—whether they have a lively Faith in God's Mercy, through Christ, i. e. Whether they verily believe that God was so exceeding merciful and gracious to Mankind, that for the Sake of Christ's Obedience,*



Obedience, Death and Sufferings, he will certainly forgive the Sins of such as shall repent and leave them; and whether in full Persuasion of this Mercy and these gracious Promises, they set about Repentance: Whether they thankfully remember Christ's Death, i. e. Whether upon the Consideration and Remembrance of the mighty and amazing Miseries to which their Sins exposed them, and from which the Death of Christ alone has freed them, they do not call to mind this great Deliverance with the greatest Joy and Thankfulness, and bless and magnify the Name of God, who hath wrought this wonderful Redemption for them by the Death of Christ, his dear and only begotten Son. And, Lastly, Whether they are in Charity with all Men.

This is the Preparation (and all the Preparation) that is necessary to the coming to the Lord's-Supper. And if People would be content to learn wherein this Duty consists, in the shortest, plainest, and the surest Method, they would go no farther than the Church-Catechism; or if a little farther, it should be but to the Communion-Service; in which they will be sure to find all that is needful or convenient for them to know or do before, and at, and after this Holy Sacrament.

I have neither Authority nor Intention to discommend or disallow the Use of other Books that treat of these Matters; but you will take it on my Word, I hope, that the shortest and the plainest Rules of Direction are still the best; that wherein soever other Books differ from this, they are not to be depended on; and that Multiplicity of Books is apt to beget Confusion. As far therefore as you will let my Judgment weigh with you, I recommend it to your Care, that you let the Church-Catechism be the Ground and Foundation of what your Children are to know of the Christian Religion; and that other good Books be called in as Helps to their Devotion only, or to explain the Particulars contained therein, if they be difficult.

Whilst you are teaching, and your Children learning all these Things, you must be sure, of all Things in the World, to go before them with a good Example; that is, to recommend, impress, and make your Lessons credible: They will understand, believe, and practise better, if they see you live as you teach them to live. Let them know that you pray to God constantly with your Family; that you love and exercise Truth, and Honesty, and Justice, in all your Dealings; let them hear and see you chide your Servants and Dependants for every Lye they tell, and every Fraud and Falshood they are guilty of; let them never hear you swear or curse, or speak any Thing disrespectfully of God, or Providence, or Holy Scriptures, or any Thing of Religion; and they will then believe you are in earnest, and be more careful of doing as you bid them, and more fearful of offending. Let them see you go your self to Church upon the Lord's-Day, and as many of the Family as can be spared with your Convenience, and there behave themselves as becomes the Servants of God in his own House, and more immediate Presence; and let them never see, even in the After-part of that good Day, any Thing light, extravagant, or rude; but something of Respect and Honour shewn to the good Exercises that are over, and to the Day devoted by the Church of Christ to God's Service. Away with that severe, fullen and morose Religion, with which some Judaizing and mistaken Christians pass that Day on one hand; and that prophane, contemptuous, Court-like Observation of it on the other; but let a decent, Christian, and good-natured Carriage, temper these Extreams; that your Children may neither dread the Approach of Sunday above other Days, nor yet long for it, as a Day of Sloth and Idleness.

I hope I may, without Offence, take this occasion to desire such of the Separation as are within my Parish, to take all the Care they can, that both their Children and their Servants go along with them to the Places where they serve God themselves, or to some other certainly; and require an Account of their so doing; that the Liberty of absenting themselves from their Parish-Churches, indulged to them by Man's Law, be not turned to the Libertinism of serving God no where, and Irreligion and Prophaneness find those



*People whom the Church loses. We must, indeed, on all sides, be solicitous lest he who sows Division amongst us, reap the Fruit thereof, and be the greatest Gainer; of this, in earnest, there was never greater Need than now; for Christianity and good Morality had never more, or greater Enemies; and therefore all our joint Endeavours will be little enough to oppose the soft Insinuations of their secret Underminers, and the most impudent and bold Attacks of their avowed and open Adversaries. I am sorry we can date the mighty Growth and Progress of these Mischiefs within the Compass of so few Years, when we were hoping still for better Things: But let this evil State provoke us to a greater Care and Zeal in the Defence of Virtue and Religion for the future.*

*You must all of you help to make this ugly Digression pertinent and useful, by taking all imaginable Care to breed up a Generation better than the present, and such as may do these wicked Days all the Disgrace and Shame they can, by a most firm Adherence to the Christian Faith, by a lively Sense of Virtue and Religion in the Soul, made manifest by a most virtuous and religious outward Practice.*

*I have done, you see, an unusual Thing in fixing a Preface to a Sermon; but it was to make the Sermon more yours than any one's else; and if the Sermon be better read for the Sake of the Preface, or if the Preface gains its End without the Sermon, I shall obtain the Point I aim at, and will answer for the Absurdity or Newness of the Method. You know I am every way your Debtor in religious Matters, and I assure you I am otherwise,*

Your Affectionate,

Humble Servant,

W. FLEETWOOD.



## P R O V. XIII. 24.

*He that spareth the Rod, hateth his Son: But he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes.*

**T**H E Education of Children is, and hath always been accounted, a Thing of such Importance, that all who have at any time discoursed or written of Government, have found themselves obliged to dwell particularly on that Subject. *Aristotle* thinks it a Matter of such Moment, that he positively determines it ought not to be left to the Parent's Choice; but that the Publick (whose especially the Children are) should be entrusted only with that Charge. And *Plato* lays down such severe Rules, that it is a Question whether they were ever practicable, or only fitted to his fancied *Commonwealth*. And, indeed, considering that they are the Seed of Empires, Kingdoms, Corporations, and Families, that the Good and Welfare of them all, depends entirely on them, there cannot be too much Care employed about their bringing up. There are so many Hazards from the sensible and tender Dispositions of these nice Plants, from noxious Airs, inclement Seasons, and their own natural Luxuriancy, that it requires a great deal of Skill to cultivate them as they should be, and as they well deserve. And it is with this Prospect, (and a larger one besides, the World to come) that the Spirit of God hath inserted so many positive Commands, and so many wise Rules of training Children up, into the Holy Scriptures: For though *One* were enough, when found there, to make it our Duty, yet there are *Many* to enforce it farther; and though the Spirit of God inspired alike the Herdsman's Son, with *Solomon* the King's, and made them alike infallible in what they should deliver to the World; yet in Compliance (may be) with our Weakness, and the fond Conceits we have of human Reason and Understanding, it is so contrived, that there are more Precepts concerning Children's Education found in *Solomon* alone, than all the Scriptures else; that they who take no Notice of the Inspiration, might yet be moved by the Authority of the greatest Wisdom, and the best Experience, and the Thing however done. I am to confine myself to that of my Text, which is as comprehensive as any; and will,

*First*, Explain the Terms of it; And

*Secondly*, Shew the Truth of the Propositions contained therein; And

*Lastly*, Make what Application may be seasonable and useful.

And, *First*, Of the Terms. *To spare the Rod*, in the first Clause, being opposed to *chastening* in the second; by the *Rod* must needs be meant, not only that particular Instrument of Punishment, but every thing besides that may prove the Means of our Correction and Amendment. And so in *Job xxxiii. 19. He is chastened with pain upon his bed.* And so in *Psalms lxix. 10. I wept, and chastened my Soul with fasting.* And so in *Isa. liii. 5. The chastisement of our peace was on him;* by which is meant the Miseries, Afflictions, Pains, and Torments that our Lord endured both in Life and Death for our Sakes; and so in a great many other Places. So that by *Chastisement* is here intended every Instrument of Correction, every Means of effecting what we intend by chastising. And *to spare the Rod*, is, not to use those Means, not to employ those Instruments for the correcting and amending what we see amiss in Children, which are proper for their Age, suited to their Dispositions, and proportioned to their Faults; whether it be Reproof and sharp Admonition, Restraint of Liberty, Disappointment



pointment of their Wills, or corporal Punishment: To do (in a word) whatever is necessary, convenient, or becoming the Children and the Parents in their respective Circumstances, is *to chasten*; and to neglect the doing it, is *to spare the Rod*. Let us see, in the next place, what is to love and hate one's Son, which are the rest of the Terms.

By *loving* and by *hating*, is not here meant the exerting actually those Passions in the Heart, for then the Text would be untrue: It is by no means likely, that an indulgent Parent sparing of his Child, should actually hate it in his Heart; or that the punishing it, should be the Effect or Sign of natural Love; for the contrary to this is mostly true: The sparing of it is the Fruits of natural Fondness and Affection, and the correcting it is not the Choice of the Heart, but the Effects of a Necessity, imposed by Prudence and Consideration, and Hopes and Fears of what may come to pass. By *loving* and by *hating* therefore is to be understood, the acting agreeably to the *Reason*, and not the *Blindness* of those Passions; the producing such Effects as are in God's Account and wise Men's too, and in our own, when freed from partial Prejudices, the Consequence and Fruits of Love and Hatred acting regularly; such as are commonly esteemed the Effects of those two Causes, whether they indeed proceed from them or no: So that to love and hate one's Children, is to behave one's self so towards them, that they and others may be convinced we love or hate them, by such Fruits as reasonably and ordinarily are the Products of those two Passions, whether those Passions actually possess the Heart or no, of which we can convince none but ourselves.

From the Terms thus explained, it will not be difficult to shew, in the *second place*, the Truth of the Two Propositions, how and in what Sense he may be said to *hate* his Son, that spares the Chastisement of him; and how he *loves* him who chastiseth him betimes: For if we are to reckon of Love and Hatred by the Effects, then it is easy to discern when Parents hate their Children, namely, when either through Neglect or Fondness, they permit them to enter on at first, or afterwards continue in such Courses, as will bring them to inevitable Ruin; when by their Want of Care, Instruction, or Correction, those Children fall into such Miseries, as the utmost Hatred of their most professed inveterate Enemies, could neither wish nor make them greater; whatever Love there may be at the Bottom. What signifies the crowning of a Victim with a Garland, when it is still drest up to Death? That Mother is as much a Murderess who stifles her Child in a Bed of Roses, as she that does it with a Pillowbear. The End and Mischief is as great, though the Means and Instrument be not the same: And where two Causes will produce the same Effect, with equal Certainty, it is no great Matter which of them it is, nor whether you give it a hard or gentle Name. It is all one as if a Parent truly hated his Child, if through his Default, he fall into those Evils which will naturally work his Mischief or Undoing; that Fault has the same Effect that downright Hatred would have had. And then for the *Will*, though he cannot be said to *will* downright the Evil of his Children, yet if he will the Means which have a natural Tendency to produce that End, he is understood, in the Accounts of Reason, to will the End, and to be guilty of the Evil in a great Degree. And so we are said to will a great many Things in Scripture, not that we will them properly, but that we do those Things, from whence the others naturally and necessarily follow. So God expostulates, in *Ezek. xviii. 31. and xxxiii. 11. Why will ye die, O house of Israel!* Not that the *Israelites* willed or desired to die, for that is a Thing incredible, if not impossible, in the hardest Sense of that Word; but that they willed such Things, as would unavoidably bring that Death, and most inevitably ruin them. So in *Psal. cvi. 24. Yea, they despised that pleasant land.* Not that they despised or rejected the Land of *Canaan* itself; but rejecting the only Means God had appointed to bring them thither, which were Faith and Trust in him, and Patience and Obedience to



to his Laws, they are said to despise the Land itself. So in *Prov. xvii. 19. He that exalteth his gate, seeketh destruction, i. e.* He that liveth above his Fortune and Condition, or that openeth wide the Flood-Gates to Iniquity, seeketh Destruction; the Meaning is, that such a one shall find Destruction, he is as one that seeks and makes Enquiry after it, and he shall surely find it: So that Men are not charged with the Mischiefs only they intend directly, but with such also as are like to follow, whether they intend them or not; nay, though they should intend the contrary. He who takes the natural and ready Means to any End, is strongly guilty of the evil Consequence, altho' he should not only not design that End and Consequence, but hope and wish it might not come to pass; because neither Hopes, nor Wishes, nor Designs, can hinder natural or moral Causes from producing natural and moral Effects. But neither is it only so in acting, but in permitting also; he is said, upon the same Account and Reason, to be guilty of the Evils that ensue, whose Duty it was, and in whose Power it was to have prevented them, but did not: It were cruel and unjust, to charge a Man with all the Evils he should by Duty prevent, but could not for want of Power; and it is not always reasonable to charge a Man with the Evils he could by his Power have prevented, but did not, because he was not obliged in Duty; because the Signification of Power, in such a Case, is to be determined by the Convenience of Time, and Place, and Person, and a great many other Circumstances, of which a Man is only able to judge himself: But where Power and Duty meet together, there the Obligation is unquestionable, and the Neglect of doing what we should and could, is inexcusable. The Application of these Rules to the Case in Hand, is, I think, as evident as the Reason of those Rules. It is plain from the Light of Nature, and the Use of Reason, as well as God's Determination in Scripture, that a Parent is obliged to educate his Children in the best and most religious Manner possible, to instruct them in all that is good, and warn them of all that is evil; and it is as plain from the Corruption of our Nature, the Perverseness of our Wills, and from lamentable Experience, that unless this Care be taken, Children will unavoidably be ruined; and therefore he who neglects this Education, which he might, and should look after, is properly enough said to undo his Children; and as he who should designedly ruin his own Children, would deservedly be said to hate them, so may he also who neglects their Education, if such Neglect be the natural and ready Way to Ruin, though he do not design that Ruin; and though that Neglect do not proceed from Hatred, yet he is said, and properly enough, both to undo and hate them.

Now the Evils that proceed from a careless, or from bad Education, from want of good Instruction, of Reproof, Restraint, or of due Chastisement in any kind, are infinite and pernicious, they are numberless, and they are intolerable. I believe it were hard to reckon up any considerable Calamity that has befallen a Kingdom, City, Family, or private Person, but might be justly charged upon this Head in some Measure.

The Reasoning of *Plato* is both just and excellent upon the Education of *Cyrus* and his Son *Cambyfes*, *Darius* and his Son *Xerxes*, and the following Kings of *Persia*; and shews the exact and perfect Correspondence betwixt the Ways of bringing up those Princes, and the Quality and Fortune of their Government and Kingdoms whilst they lived.

*Cyrus* having been brought up still in painful and laborious Exercises, and in a handsome kind of Equality of almost all Things betwixt himself and his Companions, his Reign was full of Glory and Success, and every Thing that is good and laudable. But whilst himself was reaping Palms and Crowns of Victory, he left the Education of his Son to the Ladies, who brought him up in the luxurious Softness of the *Medes*, where no body durst speak a word of Truth or Honesty, for fear of wounding his Ears, which were used to nothing but to Compliment and Flattery. And hence it came,



that the Reign and Government of this soft Prince was full as infamous and unfortunate both to himself and People, as that of his brave Father had been glorious, wise, and happy unto both. *Darius Hystaspes* afterwards ascended the Throne, and as his Education had not been in the Delights of a Court, but hard and rough, in Labours and Fatigues; so his Reign resembled, in a manner, that of *Cyrus*, both for Glory and for Conquest: But whilst he and his Compeers were spreading every where the *Persian* Honour by their Gallantry and brave Atchievements, *Xerxes* his Son was left in Women's Hands, and from them had just such another Education as *Cambyſes* had; and reigned accordingly, leaving wherever he came, the shameful Marks of a prodigious Power, put into the Hands of an ambitious Madman.

*Darius* was, indeed, a great deal more to blame than *Cyrus*, because he availed not himself of so notorious an Example of Miscarriage, nor procured a better Education for his Son; but that is not the only Use that we may make of these great Instances; one cannot chuse but see, and lament too, that the Fate and Fortune of great Empires, the Welfare and Ruin of so many hundred thousands, should depend upon the Care and the Neglect of a Parent, upon the Improvement, or the Sottishness of one Body: But this would not touch us so near, we think, if it were not also true in lesser Matters, and as fatal to private Families. The good or evil Education of Children, does not only affect themselves, but all the Stock and Kindred, more or less; there is hardly any body so inconsiderable, but somebody may be bettered, and somebody prejudiced by him; there is no body stands so single and remote, but if he falls, there is some one hurt besides himself, directly or indirectly; which, as it is a Motive to induce every Relation to see after the Improvement of Children, as it falls in their Way; so it is a special Argument to Parents, to attend more heedfully to the well educating of their Children, because the Welfare and Prejudice of so many other People does in a great Measure, depend thereon. But supposing the Evil were single, that neither Commonwealth, nor Family, nor Parent, were endamaged (as they all are) by want of Education; yet the Evils that befall the Children are so intolerably many, and pernicious both to Soul and Body, that those may well be said to *hate them*, that do not, when they might and should, prevent them.

Can we see a Man that has wholly renounced Truth and good Faith, so entirely possess'd with the Spirit of Falshood, Lying and Deceit, that one knows not how to believe a Word he says, nor how to trust him with the least Concern? Can we see a Man so ignorant of God and Goodness, of Religion and his Duty, and of all Things Spiritual, that one would think he were newly born into the World, and had not yet attained the Use of Reason, nor, indeed, the Use of Speech and Language; and another so exceeding skilful in those Matters, and of so sharp a Wit and penetrating Judgment, that he knows very well, that there is no such Thing as God and Soul, or any thing but gross, substantial Matter, modified with great Variety? Can we hear another talk so loudly, and so frequently of God, that his Mouth is filled with nothing else; and yet at last, it should be all in his Dishonour and Defiance, in wounding Oaths, in raging Blasphemies, and dreadful Imprecations, without Temptation, without Pleasure, without Profit; and at last, without his Knowledge and Design? Can we see another versed in all the Species of Intemperance, practised in all the Arts of Luxury and Wantonness, and devoted wholly to Excess, a perfect Slave to his voracious Appetite, and whose Heart and Soul is in his Dish? Another so intoxicated with the Love of Drink, that if it were possible to drown himself he would; devoting both the Day and Night to that Excess, having no other Business, nor other Pleasure and Diversion than Intemperance, neglecting all Concerns, forgetting all his Duty both to God and Man; a Reproach to Nature, Scandal to Religion, useless to all the Ends and Purposes of Living; and not only so, but by his bad Example, and the cursed  
Consequences



Consequences of those Courses, ruinous to himself and Family, and a most pernicious Creature to the Commonwealth. And another so enfeebled by his Lusts, so debilitated both in Soul and Body, by his exorbitant Indulgence to those brutal Longings, that he is scarce the Shadow of a Man; dull of Apprehension, weak in Imagination, failing in Memory, and moaped in his Understanding; in a word, as impotent of Mind as Body, and whose Soul is as loose about him as his Limbs.

Can one see, I say, these, and a Thousand other Evils and Disorders, with all their ugly Consequences, reign and rage about the World continually, and know at the same time, they are the natural Consequences of a loose and careless Education; and might, in a great measure, have been prevented by Advice, Restraint, and Punishing betimes; can one see and know this, and doubt at the same time, whether our Parents hated us or no, who should and could, but would not save us from them? What could our greatest Enemy have done besides? He would have taken the same Courses: For one that he exercises as he did *Job*, with Sorrows and Afflictions, he ruins a Thousand by Indulgences; it is the End he aims at, which is our Destruction, and it is no matter by what means he comes about it. If *Eutrapelus's* Presents are sure to prove as fatal to a weak Mind, as a Dagger in a Man's Heart, or a Glass of Poison in his Bowels, what signify the Shews of Love, and the Pretence of Friendship, which prove as deadly as the Assaults of open Enmity? What signifies it, that the Child is the Delight of its Parents Eyes, and the Idol of their Hearts; the perpetual Object of their Thoughts, and the perpetual Theme of their Discourse; that they discern new Beauties daily in it, secret Charms and Excellencies undiscoverable to all the World besides; hear Musick in his Voice, and Wit in every Word, and Grace and Comeliness in every Action? If Care be not taken to render him as excellent indeed and to himself, and as amiable to others, by Virtue, Goodness, Sweetness and Humanity, as he is to them by an abused Fancy; all other Demonstrations are but Demonstrations of their own Fondness to, and Love of their own self, and end in their own Complacency and Delight. If you would convince another of your Love, it is *he* that must feel the Effects of it in and upon himself, as well as you. It is otherwise, like the Charity of good Words, the wishing of Alms, and Food, and Raiment, with which a Man may be starved with Cold and Hunger. The Love that terminates in Fondness, and the little trifling (if no worse) Effects of that, can no more properly be called the Love of one's Children, than the bidding the Hungry be filled, the Thirsty be satisfied, and the Naked be cloathed, without supplying those Necessities, can be called *relieving them*. But the Parallel will hold no farther; for he that relieves not the distressed, does them at least no Harm or Injury; whereas the Parent, that with all this Dotage, takes not care to educate his Children virtuously and well, does them the greatest Injury and Mischief in the World; mispends the only proper Time and Season of their Improvement, deprives them of all the Advantages and Opportunities of becoming useful to the Publick, a Support to the Family, a comfortable Relation, and happy People themselves; and not only so, but exposes them defenceless, destitute and naked to abundance of Hazards and Temptations; to a contagious Air in the most sensible and tender Age; to a vicious World with vicious Inclinations; to combat with those Foes, with whom our Hearts do naturally conspire; to meet those Dangers we rejoyce to run into; to vanquish those Temptations which we seek and hunt for; to resist those Evils we had rather should prevail than be subdued: To be left, in a word, to ourselves, to the Naughtiness of our own Hearts, and the Dictates of unruly, heedless Nature, to engage with so many Sins, and so many Snares, as are commonly a Match sufficient for the greatest Care, and greatest Watchfulness, and greatest Prudence, together with the ordinary Supplies of God's Grace, is to be ruined and undone without peradventure. And if these are not true Effects of Hatred, if these are not the Tokens of the greatest Ill-will, and the most im-



improved, refined Malice, we are yet to learn what those Words mean. And this, I hope, is so evident from the Sense of the Thing, from the Reason of the Words, and from the Experience of the World, that there is little occasion to press you with the Authority of the Text, and to insist upon it, that it is King Solomon, inspired by God, that says, *That he that spareth the rod, hateth his son.* It will be somewhat clearer, by considering the other Clause in the Text, and seeing what are the Effects of Love, which is early Chastisement. *He that loveth his son, chasteneth him betimes.*

I have already made appear, that Love and Hatred, in these Cases, can only be securely judged of by the Effects; not by the Feelings, Motions, and Affections of the Parents Hearts, but by the Fruits and Consequences, of which the Children must be sensible themselves, and all the World be Judges. For the Ground of all this Mischief is, that Parents commonly consult with no body but themselves, to know if they love their Children; and finding quickly by the Reply their Hearts make, that they love them as they love their Eyes, they rest contented with the Answer, and use them indeed as tenderly; whereas they should enquire of Strangers, and of wise Men, impartial and unprejudiced; they should take their Informations from Reason and good Sense, from the Experience of the Aged, and such as studied more particularly this Affair; and they would shew them by the Effects alone, whether they loved or no; the Marks and Tokens of Affection would be visible in Manners and Instruction, beyond the Power of being deceived; and if this be too much, let them learn the Truth, from the Pity of some, and from the Reproach of others, and from the common Rumours of the Neighbourhood. Every body but themselves, will tell them, that Love of Children must appear by its Effects and Fruits; and no other Thing can possibly convince another of that Love, though they themselves are never so persuaded that they do; and to confirm it, could be content to die. But of this, enough already, and also what it is to *chasten*; It remains, that I say a Word or two of the proper Season, and that is *betimes*; *He that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes*; either betimes with respect to his Age, or with respect to his Faults.

*First*, with respect to his Age. It is in every Thing, of great Importance how we begin, what Grounds we lay, and what Foundation it is we build upon: If this be not right, the rest is but Time and Pains mis-spent, and will end in Loss and Disappointment. It is as a Man that sets out false; every Step that he proceeds, is so much out of his Way, and he must return, and begin again. And so it is with the Journeyings of Life; if in our early Youth we set out false, fall into evil Practices, or be corrupted with pernicious Maxims, it is either a great Chance that we never see our Error at all, but blindly still proceed at all adventure; or if we do, we find ourselves constrained to begin a-new, to return to the Place from whence we first set out, to our intolerable Trouble and Vexation. What a deal of human Life is spent, not in weaving a new Web, but in unravelling the old; not in learning new Lessons of Truth and Virtue, but in unlearning those of Vice and Falshood; in forgetting of evil Principles, and laying down old Prejudices; in stripping ourselves of our accustomed Habits, in parting with our old Acquaintances, in forsaking our old Friends, and in a Manner tearing out our Vitals, and rending of our Hearts asunder? All which might, in great measure, be prevented, by an early Seasoning in the Ways of Goodness. It was in prospect of this, that one of the Ancients would have Children accustomed to love and praise with Delight all virtuous Actions, and detest all Vices, even before they attained the Use of Reason; he would have them constantly observe them, know them compleatly, and form in their Minds perfect Ideas of them; and observing that Children are first of all affected with the Sense of Pleasure and of Pain, he would have them used, though never so little and young, to take or think there is no Pleasure but in Goodness, Virtue, Temperance, Justice, and the like; nor feel or think there is any great



great Pain but in those Things that are truly evil, Vice and Sin. The Thing is carried certainly too high, and the Lesson too refined and subtile to be put in Practice; but the Thing he means is this, That the Preventions and Prepossessions of Virtue, Goodness and Religion, should answer at least the Prejudices of our natural Corruption, and that Propensity and Inclination to Folly and to Sin, we bring along with us into this World; that the artificial Principles of Education might be of equal poise with our original Corruption, till the Use of our Understanding bear down the Scale on the right Side; and if it be better to prevent, than cure an Evil, to save from Danger, than deliver out of it; then it is better to begin *betimes* with chastening of our Children, to make them wise at our Expence, to let them know no Sin but by Description; to hinder them from making an Experiment so very unprofitable at best, and fatal in the Event most commonly.

But, *Secondly*, *betimes* is also to be understood with respect to the Fault; the first respecting Age, would, if it were possible, prevent the Evil; this latter is to put a speedy Stop to it, to hinder it from growing any farther; the first Advice is, to take all Care imaginable, that no corrupt or noxious Weeds should spring up in that pure and tender Soil; the second is, to root them out *betimes*, if once they come: So that to *chasten betimes*, is to see, that Punishment do constantly attend the Crime, before it be forgotten, and before an evil Habit be contracted by the frequent Repetition of evil Acts.

*First*, Before it be forgotten; as well that it may not appear to proceed from a Delight in Punishment, or to be the Effects of studied and deliberate Cruelty; as also, that the Fault being fresh in Memory, the Justice and Reasonableness of the Infliction may the better appear, and make the deeper Impression on the Mind, and raise the greater Aversion and Abhorrence of the Thing; that *Impunity* may not breed *Security* in Sin; and that Children may not argue as older People often do, that *because Sentence is not speedily executed against an evil work, therefore their hearts should be fully set in them to do evil*. It is a false and vicious Way of arguing; but because it is obvious, natural, and too easy, it should be silenced quickly, and convicted of its Falshood, that it may not impose on them a second Time.

But, *Lastly*, and most especially, for fear of evil Habits being contracted; the Dread of Punishment is the most natural Restraint upon the Mind, it is the most powerful Motive to Obedience, the very Life of all Laws, and without which they would be but a dead Letter. And all the Reason in the World they should be so; for who would obey against his Interest, or who would practise against his Inclination, without Fear? And who would fear without Punishment? According therefore to the Degrees of Impunity which Men can find or fancy, will their Obedience to the Laws, or Disobedience prove. And so it is, even in the smallest Matters that relate to Children; they naturally incline the wrong Way, and are kept strait by forcible Coercion; the Dread of Punishment is the Restraint that lies most powerfully upon them, it is the Consideration of that, that is their Motive to Obedience, and the Discouragement that keeps them from offending; and he that removes that Bar, lays them exposed and open to every Danger and Temptation. But nothing does this more effectually, than suffering them to sin at first without Reproof and Punishment; this strangely lessens the Guilt and Horror of their Faults within their own Minds, gives them Degrees of Confidence in Wickedness, and makes them think it no such heinous Matter, and venture on it frequently and freely, till it at last becomes habitual, and is rooted firmly in them; and then the Danger is a thousand Times the greater, and the Pains of remedying all these Mischiefs infinitely more: So that allowing that they *must*, sometime or other, root these Evils out, free them from the Bondage and Captivity of their Lusts and Passions, and rid them of all their bad and foolish Principles, and set them



in the Ways of Virtue and Sobriety again; allowing, I say, that this must needs be done, that they cannot possibly be safe or happy without it; nay, that they must be miserable here, and more than so hereafter; allowing of all this, it is demonstrable, that it is not only a Piece of the greatest *Wisdom* to set about it betimes, but of the greatest *Mercy* and Compassion in the World, even in the Judgment of the tenderest and most pitying Mother. It is like putting *One* to Death, to save a Hundred by the Terror of the Example; which may be Justice to the Offender, but is, in Truth, a Kindness to the rest. If *one* Reproof and Admonition will prevent the Occasion of twenty more, each one as sharp and terrible, it would be Cruelty to spare it. If an early Restraint of undue Liberty, will prevent Licentiousness hereafter, which must be restrained with Chains and Dungeons, who would not think it a Mercy to be restrained betimes? It is better, sure, to break us of our Wills betimes, and to deny us our Satisfaction in small and trifling Things, before we can have set our Hearts upon them, than to let our Wills and Inclinations gather Strength, and our Affections settle and grow firm, and then begin to fall upon us; the one is only as the bending, the other as the breaking of an Arm. A little Pain and Trouble, and Uneasiness, will serve at first to set us right again; when a continuance in our evil State, and a contracted Habit, will require a great deal of Patience, and put us to a great deal of Torment. A little Care, and a little Strength, will serve to keep a young and tender Graft in Uprightness and Order; which, if permitted to grow awry for some time, must suffer Violence and great Distortion, before it will be strait again. The older *we* grow in evil Practices and evil Maxims, the older *they* grow too, and take the faster hold, and root the deeper in us, and consequently are removed with greater Difficulty: So that allowing, that there is an absolute Necessity of their being removed at length, it is plain and manifest, beyond Denial, that it is not only better both for Parent and for Child, that it be done *betimes*, but that it is a Piece of Cruelty both in the one, and to the other, to defer it till the vicious Habit is contracted; and consequently that the Truth of the Proposition in the Text does visibly appear, *that he that loveth his son, chasteneth him betimes*. And having done with that, I am now to make Application of what hath been said, and it shall be to the Parties here concerned.

*First*, The Parent.

*Secondly*, The Children; and to both in short.

*First*, To the Parent. To shew you the Necessity there is of bringing up your Children under an early and severe Discipline; the Spirit calls the doing of it *Love*, which is a Term so fit and so expressive, that Nature seems to have appropriated it to Parents in such Manner, that they are fond of the Name, even when they have not the Thing; they would be thought to love even when they do not; it looks so like their own, and what they should do; and the Neglect of this he calls *Hatred*, a Term from which all Parents naturally abhor. But that you might not be deceived, and make your Judgments from the Passions and Affections of your own Hearts, he describes this Love and Hate by such Effects, as are not usually the Products of those Passions in the Hearts of Parents, but such as are so in God's Accounts, and wise Men's, and Children's themselves, when they grow up to Years of Understanding; and therefore that you should not set the Movings of your Hearts, and your own fond Opinions and Conceits of Kindness, against the Reason, Judgment, and Experience of the whole World, and oftentimes your own: But freeing your selves as much as may be from the Partialities of Nature, and your parental Prejudices, deal with your own as freely and as wisely as you would with the Children of a Foreigner and Stranger; believing there is need of equal Care, and equal Rigour in treating with your own, as you can visibly discern there is in treating with another's. This is the only true and lasting Kindness you can do them; all other Tokens of your Love, but that of good Dis-



Discipline, will die with you, or may be taken from them by sundry Chances and Misfortunes. This is the only Treasure and Possession you can leave them, of which they cannot be deprived by Thieves and Robbers; out of the Power of Chance, and above the Reach and Malice of the subtlest and most formidable Enemy. This alone, without any other Accession, often proves the Foundation of a lasting Happiness; but all other things, without this, signify at least nothing, but are most commonly the Instruments of greater Mischief, and the Occasions of greater Falling. And though it cannot be done without Reluctancy, and some Uneasiness on both Parts, yet it must needs be done however; it is but like removing Knives and Instruments of Danger out of their Way, for Fear of hurting them, notwithstanding all their Cryings and Impatience after them; or like the administering severe Physick, to prevent a growing Sickness, notwithstanding all their Loathings and Resistance: Your Fondness seldom hinders you from this, and yet severe and early Discipline is but an equal crossing of their Wills, an exercising of their Patience, and applying as uneasy Remedies to Evils much more dangerous, and to effect a Good much more considerable than that of Health itself. It is not easy to determine how far Children's Faults are chargeable upon their Parents; there are too many, and too intricate Circumstances to be considered, before one can decisively pronounce on such Matters; but neither of them are the safer for this Uncertainty and Doubt. The Children shall unquestionably suffer for their own Sins, and the Parents as unquestionably for their Neglect: They have both of them Guilt enough, and both of them shall have enough of Punishment; the one for not doing what they should, the other for doing what they should not. Not that after all the Care, and Discipline, and early Chastisement, the Parent is secure of the Event, but secure of himself, and his Design: He has done his Duty, and must leave the Issue in the Hands of God; he has taken the natural, ready, reasonable, and usual and appointed Means; and if the Strength of Temptations, and the Violence of the Children's Passions, or the Perverseness of their Wills, obstruct and hinder these Means from attaining their good End, he has freed his Soul: The Parent may be after that, sad and unfortunate, but has removed his Guilt and Punishment; and, *next to the effecting what we would, is the satisfaction of having done what one should.* And so much for Application to the Parent.

A Word or two to the other Party, and I have done; and that, not to persuade you that Reproof, Restraint, and Punishment are Things eligible, or no such grievous and uneasy States as they are fancied; for they are undoubtedly uneasy States, and just as bad as you experience them to be; there is no arguing against Sense, or persuading against Feeling; but that you would believe, since they proceed from People of the greatest Love and Tenderness, and fore against their Inclinations, that they are the most natural and necessary Means of effecting the greatest Good, and preventing the greatest Evils in the World, and so designed by those that do inflict them. It is true what St. Paul observes in another Case, *Heb. xii. 11. That no chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.* You cannot love Correction and Restraint; but when you shall hereafter see and feel the Effects of all this careful Discipline, in the Fear of God, in the Government of your Passions, in Temperance, in Chastity, in Patience under Evils, in bearing Disappointments, in the Joys of Innocence, and the Comforts of a good Conscience; then you will bless your Parents and Instructors, who, by their Admonitions, seasonable Reproofs, and early Chastisements, delivered you from the Snares of Sin and Death, from the Plague of a guilty Mind, from an uneasy Remembrance of what is past, and a fearful looking-for of Evils to come, which you will then desire to have avoided, though with the utmost Pain and Torment, and curse the Indulgence that prevented it. You will have

other



other Notions and Opinions of the Love of Parents and Instructors than you now have; and therefore in the mean time, let the Reason, Wisdom, and Experience of all Ages convince you, that the Courses taken to make you good and happy, are not only fit and suited to your Age and Tempers, but necessary and unavoidable, though for the present they appear so grievous and unacceptable; and therefore be not so hasty and impatient under them, nor covet so to be delivered from them; be not so fond of immature Manhood, only because you think it is a State of Freedom from the Bondage of your Discipline. That Age has no such Charms in it as you imagine; and when aspired to so ambitiously, and so unseasonably, it is only to perfect your Destruction, and compleat your Misery the sooner; it is according to the good or ill Improvement of this your Season of Discipline, that Manhood shall prove more or less comfortable; the Ground is now a cultivating, the Seed is now a sowing, that shall spring up to lasting Honour and Advantage, or to your lasting Shame and Ruin: And therefore though the Heats of Fancy, the Vigour of your springing youth, and Fervour of Complexion, may suggest both strange and forward Things; yet trust them not, nor listen to them; it is but like the Gaiety that springs up from the Fumes of new Wine, that warm and delight Men for a Moment, but soon evaporate, and leave the Heart in greater Damps and Melancholy. You will quickly find the Mischiefs of forsaking Discipline, and all those gay Expectances will vanish and conclude in lamentable Disappointments; but the Trouble is, that then Repentance comes too late, the Time is irrecoverable, and the Evil is irremediable. And therefore, to conclude, learn to be wise in this your Hour, the Wisdom at least of suffering others to be wise and careful for you, in Things of which you have as yet no Knowledge or Experience; and yet so necessary to you, that thereupon depends the Welfare and Felicity of all your Lives.



A  
S E R M O N

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, January 30.  
169<sup>8</sup>, before the Right Honourable the Lord  
Mayor and Court of Aldermen.

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I S A M. XXVI. 10, 11.

*David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or  
his Day shall come to die, or he shall descend into Battel, and perish.  
The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's  
Anointed.*

**T**Hough one must needs be sensible, that Arguments and Inferences fetched from the *Jewish* Government, cannot by any means conclude with certainty another Nation, and a different Constitution; and that the Scripture-Instances themselves, without some general positive Command to follow them, can oblige no farther than they carry Reason and Convenience along with them; yet because the World is governed mostly by Examples, and Scripture-Examples chiefly urged, and fittest for our Imitation; it may not be improper to consider in this History the Provocations *Saul* had given to *David*, and the Opportunities that *David* had to avenge himself, and take away his Life: This I will do in the *first place*; and in the *second*, consider the Reason *David* here assigns for his Proceedings; *It is the Lord's Anointed*: And in the *third* and *last place*, apply myself a little to the Occasion of this Day's Assembly.

I. The Persons here concerned are *Saul* and *David*, the King of *Israel* and his Servant, the Father and the Son-in-law; and the State in which the Text shews us these Two, was that of *Enmity*; it was the second Time that *Saul*, with a premeditated formed Design, had hunted after *David* to destroy him; and it was the second Time that God had put the former in the latter's Power, and given his Life into his Hands; which he was tender of the second Time, and spared it with his old and usual good Expression, *God forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's Anointed*. A noble Instance this, if it were alone, of a most excellent forgiving Nature, of firm and solid Virtue, of steady and unshaken Loyalty; but when considered with its Circumstances that attended it, the Provocations *Saul* had given, and the Advantages that *David* had, it will appear an Act so brave and generous, that it would be flattering up ourselves in vain, to hope to see it ever parallel'd throughout.

Consider therefore, *First*, The Prince that was his Captive now, and at his Mercy, had sometime since descended so below himself, as to become the Envier and Detractor from his Praise, was poorly jealous of the Honours he had purchased, and tried to blast the Laurels he had gathered at the Expence of so much painful Toil and Hazard; and it is no little Share of Grace and Goodness, that can restrain a young aspiring Hero, from taking Vengeance on the Maligners of his Praise, and from removing all Impediments in his Pursuit of Fame and Glory.

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Consider,



Confider, *Secondly*, This was the Prince that had attempted twice to murder him himself, had thrown his Javelin twice to fix him to the Wall, and chose to make himself the Executioner of his own Choler and Revenge, hearkening ungratefully to the Suggestions of that *Evil Spirit*, which the good Youth was at that present labouring with his Musick to appease and charm; and when Men's Lives are so apparently sought after, they usually lay all Respects aside, and listen to the Dictates of unruly Nature.

*Thirdly*, He was a false perfidious Prince; under Pretence of honouring and advancing him, he had removed him from himself, and made him Captain over a Thousand; and still to make the Matter less suspicious, said unto him, *Behold my elder Daughter Merab; her will I give to thee for a wife; only be valiant for me, and fight the Lord's Battels.* But what follows? For Saul said, *Let not mine hand be on him, but let the hand of the Philistines.* Nothing affects a generous Mind so sensibly, as being cheated under Shew of Friendship; and Treachery is never viler, than when it is covered with the Mask of Godliness.

But, after all, it came to pass, at the time when Merab, Saul's Daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite to wife; an Affront in its own Nature very great undoubtedly; but such as, according to the Maxims of our modern Gallantry, were never to be pardoned. But worse yet; When Michal's voluntary Love had amply satisfied the Disappointment he had had in Merab, the unrighteous Father, hardened in his Cruelty, would make his Daughter instrumental in the murdering of his Son-in-law, would have the Left Hand cut the Right one off, the Wife conspire against her Lord and Husband, and betray the Life she loved and prized above her own. And when a Man has thus apparently attempted to debauch the Loyalty, and break the Union of the Marriage-bed, to dissolve those sacred Bands, to interrupt the sweetest Commerce of Man's Life, and violate all the Ties of Nature, Reason, and Religion, by a Practice of such horrid and unnatural Wickedness, there is hardly any Excess of Fury so exorbitant, but seems at first excusable, in a thus injured and abused Husband. But God forbid, said David, notwithstanding all this, that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed. The Villany of this Attempt, the Wickedness of Saul, and David's Virtue, might yet be raised, by considering what were the Effects of this his Rage and Disappointment; he was so cruel, that he took the Princess from her Husband, broke off the Comfort of her Life, and sent her to a Stranger's loathed, unhallowed Bed; and even when Jonathan himself, his noblest, best beloved Son, the Prop and Comfort of his Age, the Light and Joy of Israel, the Glory of his House, and the Support of his Kingdom, came but to intercede in his Friend's behalf, and to excuse his Absence, Saul's Anger was so enkindled at him, that he cast a Javelin at him, to have nailed him to the Wall; a Piece of Rage and brutal Violence that Nature wants a Name for, but a sure Indication that such a settled Wrath was never to be appeased, and therefore never to be ventured more; and therefore now secured for ever.

But farther, he was perjured, he had but lately taken a solemn Oath before the Lord and Jonathan, that David should not be slain; when behold, upon the first awakening of his evil Spirit, even whilst his Vows were warm upon his Lips, he threw himself the second Javelin at his Heart, and threw away all Faith and Honour with it. And when a Prince hath thus abandoned common Honesty, broken the sacred Cords that knit Societies, and keep up Governments and mutual Correspondences together, with Relations natural and civil, and by his Perjuries provoked the Vengeance of God, and is delivered into the Hands of those whose Innocence and good Credulity he had imposed on, and abused almost to their Destruction: Oh! what a mighty Measure



Measure of God's Grace must fill the Heart of him, that then could say, *The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed.*

There are some Things besides our Lives and Persons, in which, if we are touched, we think ourselves extremely injured; and they are especially our *Friends*, our *Fortunes* and *Religion*; and *David* was in every one of these affected more or less by *Saul's* implacable Pursuit, and hunting after him. He was constrained to change his Habitation, carry his Father and his Mother, and his whole Family, into a strange Country, aged and feeble, as they needs must be. Now to be forced, when one is growing old, and stooping with Infirmities, to forsake one's native Place, the Dwelling of one's Ancestors, the Comforts of good Neighbourhood, the usual Prospects and familiar Objects of one's Sight, with all the old Conveniences of Life, in the way one is in; for a strange Country, barbarous Neighbours, new Laws and Usages, and Tongue unknown, must needs be hard and troublesome to human Nature, and an Oppression scarce to be endured: yet this was *David's* Case, who felt these Evils in himself, but much more sensibly in the Distresses of his Parents, who, by the Fury of the King, were driven to *Mispeh of the King of Moab*.

And then for his *Estate*, it could not otherwise be, but he must suffer much in that respect, it was impossible to remove his whole Effects: Kings have long Hands, and piercing Eyes, and by their Officers can reach and see at mighty Distance. And *Saul* had *Harpies* in his Court undoubtedly, as well as other Kings, ready to beg and seize upon the Estates of such as by their Crimes or their Misfortunes, were obnoxious to the King's Displeasure.

Lastly, For his *Religion*, Although he suffered nothing *for* or *by* it, yet much he suffered for the want of it; to be driven away into a wicked and idolatrous Country, and be debarred the Exercise of his Religion; to be hurried from God's Temple, and the communicating in the appointed daily Service of that Holy Place, was little less than painful Martyrdom to one so zealously and so devoutly bent as *David* was.

Let any Man recount the Evils I have mentioned, sum up the Persecutions and the Provocations of King *Saul*, and set before his Eyes, himself, or any one in *David's* Case, wronged in his Honour, divorced from his Nuptial Bed against his Will, despoiled of his Estate and Property, wounded in the Distresses and Afflictions of his Parents, attempted privately to be destroyed, pursued in Publick as an Enemy, and hunted like a Partridge on the Mountains, and forced to wander like a Fugitive, and seek his Bread out in desolate Places, and in a manner excommunicated, by being barred the Use and Exercise of his Religion: Let any Man, I say, but put himself in these bad Circumstances, and find himself in a Capacity of delivering himself from out of them, as *David* was, and think with himself what he would do. No, — it is not that I would advise him to, — let him rather think what *David* here did, — *The Lord forbid, that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed.*

There is hardly any one of all these single Passages that happens to ourselves, or our Acquaintance, but puts us to Extremity, and provokes us beyond all Patience; we call it an intolerable Oppression, and weary Heaven and Earth with our Complaints, and think ourselves undone, till we have found our Satisfaction or Revenge. How restless are we in contriving Snares, how quick in catching Opportunities, and how malicious in improving them to our ill-natured Purposes! Much otherwise was it with righteous *David* here, who called not to his Mind his past Wrongs, nor cast his Dangers and Oppressions up, to make a terrible Account; who consulted not with Flesh and Blood, nor debated the Matter with those ill Advisers within, his Choler and Revenge, who cure one Evil by a hundred worse: Yet he, as he had most Reason, so had he most Opportunities, and most Advantages, to carve out whatever Satisfaction he might



might judge sufficient: Which is what for his Honour, and our Instruction, I must *Secondly* insist on.

He was, *First*, The King's Son-in-law, one of the greatest Honours in the Kingdom, and an Advancement that must needs draw after it a great many Friends and Favourers, and make him strong Alliances at Court; and though those Friendships commonly live but like Flies, while the benign and quickning Influences of the Sun continue, and dye upon the Frowns and Lowrings of their Prince; yet it were too hard a Reflection on the Lightness of those Places, to think such solid Virtue, and unquestioned Merit, as eminently shone in *David*, had not acquired him a considerable Party, and a well-grounded Interest at Court.

But, *Secondly*, he was a mighty Man of Valour, he fought the *Lord's Battels*; he was the Sword and Shield, the Horsemen and the Chariots of *Israel*: He was the Scourge of the *Philistines*, and indeed of all the idolatrous Nations round; the great Defender of the *Jewish* Faith, and the Supporter of God's Worship. And it is hard to think a Man thus qualified, should fail of bearing Sway amongst the Soldiery, and being gracious in the Camp; and all Men know how far that tends to the promoting and securing any great Designs.

*Thirdly*, This *David* was beloved of all the People, the Favourite of his Country, the very Idol of the Crowd. His Youth, his Beauty, his attractive Grace and popular Deportment, together with his Virtue and Valour, had stolen the People's Hearts, and charmed them so to Love and Admiration, that he became the Theme of their perpetual Talk; their Songs and Dances were composed in Honour of his great Achievements, and all their Instruments of Joy and Musick, were tuned to his invidious Praises. How harsh and rude must those Expressions of their Pleasure be, how unmannerly and ill-natured a Triumph, to have the Women come to meet the King himself, and grate him with the Burthen of their Song, *Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands*. I do not wonder much, when I consider human Nature, that *Saul* (as it follows in the next Verse) *was very wroth, and the saying displeased him*; and then upon a Repetition of that Sentence, it was very natural to infer, *What can he have more but the kingdom?* It is fatal to a Prince to lose himself, or suffer any else to get the Affections of his People. A King may be as wroth as *Ahasuerus* was, and may decree terrible Things, and Priests may preach up Patience and Obedience long enough; but it will not do, unless the Affections of the Subjects go along therewith. He that hath never gotten these, or lost them once, may find to his Cost, when ever he comes to try, that the Ties of Duty are not half so strong as the Bands of Love; nor the Service of the Body comparable to the Affections of the Mind; whereas he that hath gained the Heart, will certainly be Master of the Hand and Service on Occasion. And this was it that *Saul* foresaw and dreaded so; and this was it that *David* was already in Possession of. But notwithstanding all this, great as he was in Court, great as he was in Camp, and greater yet in Favour of the People, he would not venture on the impious Fact; still it was, *The Lord forbid, that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed*.

*The Lord forbid*; yet *David* knew it was this very Lord that had rejected *Saul* from being King, that rent the Kingdom from him, and that repented he had ever made him King at all. Nay, *David* knew himself the Man designed by God to be his Successor, and had accordingly been anointed King by *Samuel*, at the Town of *Bethlehem*.

It is surely with Ambition, as with other Passions, the fantastick and imaginary Joys are greater than the experienced and substantial ones: The Hopes and Expectations far exceed the Pleasures of Possession. Whatever Cares belong to Crowns, they  
lye



lye concealed within their Circles, and are more seldom seen than felt; and therefore more engage in their Pursuits, than are contented when they get them. But this Temptation found no Place with *David*; young, and gay, and vigorous as he was, and even so near the Crown, that by conniving at *Abishai's* Blow, he might have been in full and sure Possession of it; yet he suffered not himself to be transported beyond the Bounds of rigid Honesty and Loyalty; and still cries out, *The Lord forbid*—

Now, to conclude, and to compleat this Character, add, *Lastly*, to these great Advantages of being Son-in-law, a mighty Man of Valour, and accepted in the Sight of all the People, of knowing *Saul rejected*, and himself designed for Successor, the greatest yet of all Advantages, and that is *Opportunity*; that, without which all others signify but little; and that, with which alone Men serve their Turns, and make up the Defects of all the rest; that Pandar to all Sin, and fatal Snare of Virtue! That has ruined many thousand Souls, and betrayed them into most detestable Commissions; sometimes against the best Convictions of their Understandings; nay, and sometimes against their Vows and Resolutions: Opportunity, that few have Virtue, few have Strength sufficient to withstand! And of all Opportunities, none are so strong, and work so powerfully upon the Minds of Men, as those that look like *Providential* ones, and seem to come from God. Yet this was *David's* Opportunity, and yet withstood. *Behold*, said the Men of *David* to him, Chap. xxiv. and ver. 4. *Behold the day, of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do unto him as shall seem good unto thee.* And again, in the Chap. of the Text, and ver. 8. *Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day; now therefore let me smite him, I pray, with the spear unto the Earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.* As if he had said, “Look round you, noble Youth, and  
“ see how Heaven and Earth conspire in your Advancement; mark how the Providence of God hath ordered every Thing in your behalf, contriving every Circum-  
“ stance to concur in setting the Crown upon your Head. How many *Psalms* have  
“ you composed, how many Vows, how many earnest Prayers have you put up, that  
“ God would visit your Afflictions, confound your Enemies, and redeem you from  
“ Distress? Behold then, in this Opportunity, your Prayers are answered, and your  
“ Vows returned. This is the Day, this is the Time, of which the Lord said, *I will*  
“ *deliver thine enemy into thine hand.* Is it not he, and he alone, hath wrought this  
“ great Salvation for thee? With his own Right-hand, and with his holy Arm, hath  
“ he bestowed on thee this Victory. What could our few and feeble Troops have done  
“ against a Royal Army, had not the Finger of God been visible in all this Action;  
“ had not his gracious Providence disposed of all Events in Favour of your Claim?  
“ *It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in all our eyes;* improve it therefore to his Ho-  
“ nour, and the advancing his Designs, in setting you over his chosen People. Will  
“ you withstand the Purposes of God, or will you not concur with his good Provi-  
“ dence? God hath delivered *Saul* into your Hands, and do not tempt the Lord, by  
“ slighting or neglecting of his Times and Seasons; it were Madness and Impiety to  
“ let him escape: You must not think the Lord will work out such Deliverances e-  
“ very Day; to-day you are a Conqueror and a King, if you but please; to-morrow  
“ you may be a Rebel and undone, and who shall pity you? You shall not need to im-  
“ brue your own Hands in his Blood; you shall not need to incur the Odium of com-  
“ manding such a Thing to any else; I will spare your Fame the Guilt of both; per-  
“ mit me only, by myself, to be the Minister of Providence, the Executioner of  
“ God's Designs.” This was the Sense and Purport of *Abishai's* Speech, and carried so much Force and worldly Reason with it, that none but one that had the Fear of God continually before his Eyes, could possibly withstand it, or say with *David*, *The Lord forbid, that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's Anointed.*



And now having done what Right I could to the particular State and Circumstances of *Saul* and *David*, King and Subject, and shewed such Provocations on the one hand, and such Temptations and Advantages on the other, as it may be never did before, or never will again hereafter happen :

I am to proceed, and consider, *Secondly*, The Reason *David* gave for his Refusal of *Abishai's*, and the Soldiers Proffer, *It is the Lord's anointed*.

By the *Lord's anointed* is here meant, the Man that was by God's Designation and Appointment anointed King or Captain over all the People, which was done by the Ceremony of pouring a Vial of Oil upon his Head, and kissing him: So that *the anointed of the Lord*, signifies no more than an ordinary King with us. *David* therefore would not stretch forth his Hand against *Saul*, because he was *his King*: He would fly from before him, though he was *his King*, as he did from *Keilah*; and he would gather up 600 Men to guard him from the Violence of (I will not say the King, but) his illegal and blood-thirsty Servants that pursued him: But he would not touch the King's Life; and because he has expressed no other Reason, than that he was the *Lord's anointed*, that is, a *King*, we must either conclude, that the Laws of God, or the fundamental Constitutions of the Nation had guarded the Persons of their Kings from any Violence; or else that *David* abstained out of a Principle of Tenderness; or from the Unreasonableness of the Thing itself; or from the Infamy that always waited on that wicked Practice. The *Law of God* did certainly secure the Lives of Kings as well as other Mens, if it did not more. And it appears by the very Name of *Treason*, that the *Civil Constitution* had preserved the Royal Person sacred and inviolable; and if we take our Measures from the absolute and arbitrary Sway of all the *Eastern Monarchs*, we cannot but conclude the Customs of *Judæa*, amongst the rest, must have conciliated a mighty Awe and Reverence to their Princes. — And for the *Unreasonableness* of such Attempts, it is plain, that a Government cannot possibly subsist for any time, where any kind of Violence is allowed against the Magistrate. We see what wicked Work is made in some unhappy States, where private Executions of Revenge betwixt Particulars are indulged, or frequently connived at. But Government is at end, where *Rulers* are exposed to popular Assaults, or private Assassinations: Besides, there is a great Indecency in the Nature of the Thing; to see the Lord and Master of a Nation reduced to wretched Villany; to see the Man whom all the Kingdom honoured and adored, despised and trampled on; but most of all, to find a Sovereign Arbiter and Disposer of his Subject's Lives, to be despoiled of his own. But, *Lastly*, it is, and has always been, and always will, I hope, be infamous to shed their Blood.

Although Mankind has generally a Relish of Liberty, and has for every Age received the Mention of its brave Assertors with Reverence and Esteem; yet, I know not how, where-ever it has been vindicated by the Blood of Kings, (though they were truly very bad) it gives some kind of Shock to human Nature, and blemishes the Glory of the Action.

Never, perhaps, was any Man more fitted for the vindicating the antient Liberties of *Rome*, than *M. Brutus* was; a sober, virtuous, honest, and disinterested Man, freed from all Imputation of Revenge or Malice by his Enemies, and one that had no other Prospect in the World, than the redeeming of his Country from its Slavery; and yet because he could not compass his Intent, but by the Death of its brave Ravisher, his Virtues and most noble Qualities have all been lost under the Infamy of *Parricide* and *Traytor*: So natural an Abhorrence have all Men for shedding of Princes Blood, and taking away their Lives.

But what then, Is the World provided for no better than so? Hath God indeed subjected all Mankind to the tyrannick, impotent, and arbitrary Sway of some few Men, who have sometimes less Wisdom, and frequently less Virtue than their Neighbours? It

fares



fares but ill, it seems, with us, when our Estates and Properties, our Lives and Persons, Wives and Daughters, our Liberties and our Religion too, are put into the Hands of some weak, wicked, or perverse, yet uncontroulable Humour; will not this Impunity breed greater Licentiousness in Princes, and augment the Slavery of the Subjects to such Degree, as it can go no lower; and so the Sacredness of one Man shall be the Ruin of many thousands? In answer to this, we must acknowledge, that according to Nature and good Reason, there seems to be a great deal of Iniquity and Partiality in these Cases; but we must say withal, that Religion is neither chargeable with these Hardships, nor answerable for them; God hath declared himself in Favour of no one sort of Government, with respect to all the World, nor laid it by Command on all People: Our Saviour said, *his kingdom was not of this world*, and did indeed concern himself with nothing of it. St. Peter and St. Paul did press Obedience and Subjection on the Christians, as they found Occasion; but then it was Obedience and Subjection to the Laws and different Constitutions of the different Governments they lived under, and did not thereby change, or think of changing them.

There were, no question, in the Apostles Days, very different Forms of Government in the World, some absolute, and some limited; some made their Will the Law, and others governed according to known and settled Laws; some succeeded by way of Inheritance, and others were elected to the Rule: Now, if when St. Paul and St. Peter press the Christians they wrote to, to Submission and Obedience, they only mean, that those *particular* Christians should obey the particular Governments they lived under; then there arises no Obligation to any other Christians to obey their Governors, by virtue of any thing said by these Apostles. But if *all* Christians are hereby understood to be exhorted to Obedience to their Governors (as most undoubtedly they are) then are all Christians exhorted to pay such Obedience to their Governors, as the particular Constitution of the Government they lived under called for and required. And then the Christians who lived under an absolute Monarch, were to pay such Obedience as that Government required; and the Christians who lived under a limited and mixed Monarchy, were to obey as that Government required; and so of all the rest, they were all to submit themselves to the several Governments they lived under. For it is not to be presumed, that St. Peter and St. Paul, by their pressing and commanding Christians to submit to and obey their Governors, changed the several Forms and Constitutions of Government, and required the Christians of a limited and mixed Monarchy to obey their Superiors in the same Manner, Measure and Degree, as those of an *absolute* one did theirs; but Christianity required such Obedience as the Laws and Customs of the Country called for, and exacted at their Hands: And, truly, it would be strange to imagine that Christianity should press Men to obey, in Instances where the Laws of the Country require no Obedience; since every Country is presumed to understand and consult its own Interest best, and to secure such Obedience from the Subjects, as would best procure and continue such their Interest. And therefore if one Country had liked and approved of such a Form and Constitution of Government, and found it best and fittest for it, with respect to its Situation, and its Neighbourhood, and to the Temper and the Genius of its People and Inhabitants; if it had pitched upon such Laws as it found by Experience most convenient for it; if such and such were the Powers and Prerogatives of the Superiors, and such and such the Privileges and Immunities of the Subjects, Christianity did not intend to alter this, and say, that the Superiors shall have more Power and a fuller Authority over the People, and the People shall have less and fewer Privileges than what are already agreed to on both hands; neither did it come to set the People higher, and the Princes lower than they were. Christianity did not meddle with these Matters, nor say any thing on either side; but coming to settle Peace and Quiet, Truth and Honesty, Justice and Religion, in the Hearts of all Men,



Men, and to make the whole World easy and happy, it commanded Governors to exercise their Power with Justice and Uprightness, with Clemency and Prudence, and all Subjects to obey with Reverence and Submission, with Patience and Contentedness; but it came not to alter Constitutions, nor to give either Governors or People more Power and Authority than they had before: For if it had, it had brought a Sword along with it, it had come to set the Princes of the World at Variance with the People, and the People with their Princes; to prejudice Men's Civil Rights and Liberties, and put them in a worse Condition, as to this World, than they were in before, by overthrowing settled Laws, by undoing Compacts and Agreements, the only Preservatives of Civil Society. In a word, there would be no End of the Mischiefs that would ensue upon understanding Christianity to oblige all People of the World alike to Obedience and Submission to their Rulers, without respect to the different Laws and Constitutions of different Kingdoms and Governments; and it would be a very bad Account and Character of that Religion: Whereas, if Christianity came to urge Obedience to the Laws of every Country (not barbarous, obscene, nor impious, nor any ways execrable) it came to secure that Country in the Way and Manner it thought the best and fittest for its Interest and Happiness, and brought a Blessing with it; and shewed both to Prince and People, what was the Measure and the Rule of the one's Power, and of the other's Obedience; a Thing most necessary to be known, where the Event is of so great Importance, both in this World and that to come. Since therefore Christianity came not to make the Laws that Subjects must obey, but to urge the Subjects to obey the Laws *made* by the Legislative Power, where-ever that resides: there is no Reason why it should be charged with any of the Mischiefs or the Inconveniencies of a Government too absolute, or too much limited: And therefore, (to bring the Matter home) the unlimited Extent of Power, placed in the Prince's Hands, or the Sacredness of his Person, or his being unaccountable to any one for his Proceedings, are Things that depend entirely on the civil Constitution, and we must know them from the Laws, and the continued Usages and Customs of the Country, immemorial, or agreed upon.

No doubt but Kings may take up Crowns on pitiful and wretched Terms, as well as Subjects willingly submit their Liberties to the Will of Princes; and each of them must stand to the Conditions, though very inconvenient ones, till they can honestly obtain better. I know no better, and no other certain Rule for all the World to consider than this, *Look to the Constitution, look to the Laws and Customs of a Country*, if you would know the Prince's Power or Peoples Privilege. It is not to the Men of great Reason, and much Reading, the finest Speculators and Essayers, one should be referred to upon these Occasions; but to Histories and Records, the Laws and Statutes, Customs and Usages that are accepted in a Nation; and therefore, where by these, we find the Lives and Liberties of Princes are held sacred and inviolable; it is to no purpose to object the Inconveniencies, both real and imaginary, that may arise from such Impunity. *Look to the Laws and Constitution.* I see, in such a Case, no Way is left, but to say with *David*, in the Text,—*The Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall perish in the battel; but God forbid, that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's Anointed.*

*The Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come, or he shall perish in the battel;* that is, I leave him to God's Disposal; let God, the Judge of all the Earth, do with him as he pleases. And though we think the leaving wicked Kings to God, is the lightest and the kindest Expression of nothing in the World that can be; yet we would quickly alter our Opinions, and be of *David's* Mind, if we would give ourselves leave to consider,

*First, That he hates Injustice more,*

*Secondly,*



*Secondly*, That he is much more *ready*, And,  
*Thirdly*, Much more *able* to punish it, than we can be.

*First*, He hates it more: He hates it purely for the Malice of its Nature, and its intrinsic Evil; we only for our own and Interests sake, because we either feel or dread its Mischiefs. He hates Oppression, Tyranny, and Cruelty, because they are the Contradictions of his own Divine, and the Corruptions of our human Nature: They are directly opposite to his most glorious Attribute of Justice, to his most gracious ones of Mercy and Compassion. He looks with Indignation on those haughty Sons of Violence and Injustice, that abuse the Power that God intrusted them, and the great Titles that he honoured them withal, for the Use and Benefit, to the Destruction and Confusion of the World, only to satisfy their cruel Rage, or vain Ambition. There is not a Groan nor Murmur of the poor oppressed, but makes its Way to Heaven, and finds Accession to the Throne of Grace; he numbers all our Sighs, and counts our Tears, and notes down our Afflictions in his Book, and treasures them in Wrath, against the Day of Wrath. And if we would be strong and patient for a while, and tarry but the Lord's Leisure, we should certainly see, he is a God that hates and punishes Iniquity.

*Secondly*, He is much more willing to punish wicked Governors than we can be. Not that the Goodness of God is so ready to afflict or grieve the Sons of Men, as they are to deserve it; or that the human Fury does not sometimes anticipate the divine Vengeance; but that it is more present to his Nature, and more immediately his Will to punish Sin, than it can possibly be with us. The Love of Justice, and the Hate of Sin, is so essentially united to his Being, that one may sooner fancy no Divinity at all, than that it is not willing to reward the proud Oppressors after their deservings.

Men may be bribed by Passions, Interest and Affections, some from pursuing, others from administering, the Justice due to great Offenders. The Fears and Threatnings of Displeasure, the Hopes of Favour and Advancement, the Charm of soft Words, and the natural Pity of Mankind, have oftentimes diverted the most resolved, and laid the Fury of the most enraged. But God, as he sees not with Men's Eyes, so neither is he moved with human Motives; but is inflexible in his Decrees, which are, to punish great Delinquents with great Wrath; and has declared, that nothing but sincere Repentance can prevent his Judgments.

And, *Lastly*, He is much more able. He is able to punish them in this Life, and in the next: He can punish them in this Life, by defeating all their Enterprizes, and blasting all their Purposes; by infatuating their Counsellors, and turning the Wisdom of *Achitophel* to Folly and Destruction; by suffering the Enemy to sow Diffensions, Strife and Discord in their Nations; by alienating the Affections of the People; by scattering the Spirit of Fear and of Distrust throughout their Armies, and causing them to turn their Backs upon their Enemies; and by reducing themselves to Misery and great Distress; and sometimes suffering them to perish by the Sword, or some more ignominious Death, as well as common Men. But if this be not enough, let them know, that *he is able, after he has destroyed the body, to cast both soul and body into hell fire.* *Tophet*, saith *Isaiah*, the xxxth and the 33d, is prepared for the king, he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire, and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of Brimstone, doth kindle it. Hear therefore, O ye kings, (in the vith of the *Wisdom of Solomon*) and understand; learn ye that he judges of the ends of the earth; give ear you that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of Nations; for power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the highest, who shall try your words and search out your counsels; because being ministers of his kingdom, you have



*not judged aright, nor kept the law, nor walked after the counsel of God; horribly and speedily shall he come upon you; for a sharp judgment shall be to them that be in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.*

And is it not a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God, thus sharpened and prepared to execute full Vengeance on ungodly Governors? It is not therefore so unreasonable and trifling a Thing as is commonly reputed, to say, that wicked Princes must be left to God; it is saying, they are left to one that hates them with a perfect Hatred; to one that will and can pour out the Vials of Wrath upon their Heads, as neither Eye can see, nor Tongue express, nor Heart of Man conceive, and that to all Eternity.

And having thus gone through my Text, I should in the *last place*, apply myself to the sad Occasion of this Day's assembling; but having been so free in handling the first Parts, I shall scarce be allowed to do right at full to this; and there is, I hope, the less Occasion for it, because the sad History is so well known, and so sufficiently regretted and deplored by honest Men; and the Design especially of this *Anniversary* being more for the Use, Instruction, and Advantage of the living Subject, than for the Praise and Honour of the dead King; the Discourse I have raised from the Text, will, if attended to, answer the greater and the better End; and there is little need to meddle with the second and the less.

That Prince's Praises speak themselves aloud; and though Misfortunes add great Lustre to Mens Virtues, and set them off to great Advantage, (as Tears shew some fair Faces yet more beautiful) yet *Charles the First* might well have past for one of our most excellent Kings, although he had not had the Exercise of such Afflictions as he met withal, but had been always fortunate. But having had the Advantage of those Trials, and thereby practised many other Virtues, rare and unseen in Kings, I know not now whom to prefer before him; and God forbid I should be thought to put him under the Disadvantage of representing *Saul* in the Comparison. He was (and that is as much as I can say) no more like *Saul*, than any of his *Murderers* was like *David*. If there was some Misgovernment, and some unhappy Male-administration in his Reign (as who can be so ignorant and partial to deny it) we must, if we will be just to the Truth, discharge his Person, in great measure of it, and lay it where it ought to lye, much of it on some of his indiscreet and zealous Servants, who were unquestionably Men of better Meaning than Abilities, and who appear (at least at so much Distance) not to have understood sufficiently the Ground they stood upon, the Times they lived in, and the Men they had to deal withal; and somewhat on the Passions of her, who, though she could intend no ill to him, yet through her Fondness for her Party, (that constant Mischief to this Nation) embroiled him first with his distempered People. But having taken this Liberty, I ought to add, that never were Miscarriages improved to such a Height, nor aggravated with more Malice: Their Adversaries got some Truths, and used them, as the Devil does the Scriptures, always perversely, and to bad Purposes; they mingled them with odious Calumnies and Slanders, and treacherous Insinuations; and made them help to make the stronger Poison, and to disperse it more effectually into the Peoples Veins.

As to the Personal Virtues of this Prince, Envy itself hath never yet found any Thing to say against them: Sober and temperate to a wonder, chaste to his Queen, and faithful to his first Vows; of so pure Innocence, and such unspotted Sanctity in that behalf, that Calumny hath never fixed so much as a Suspicion on his Reputation. And for his Zeal to God, and his Devotion to his Service, his constant Attendance and good Behaviour in his Prayers, his firm Adhesion to the Church, not out of Prejudice or pertinacious Obstinacy in what he had been educated, but true and solid under-



understanding of her Constitution, with his great Care and Love to all her Ministers, as they were made his Crimes and Accusation by his Enemies, so by his Friends they have been made an Objection to God's Providence, in suffering such a righteous Prince to fall into the Hands of such abominable People; and such an Objection as must stay (they think) to be solved by that great Day, when all such Arguments will certainly be fully answered, and all such Clamours silenced, and all the World shall see and feel that God is just, and no Unrighteousness dwells with him.

And yet we cannot strictly say, this Day's Offence hath been hitherto unaccounted for, and unavenged. No Man (I think) can assign any one Head, to which we may so properly ascribe the continual Troubles and Alarms that have for many Years disturbed this Nation, the vast Calamities and most amazing Distresses it has laboured under, as to the atrocious and most execrable Action of this Day, and its most cursed Consequences, the debauching both the Morals and Religion of our Princes and great Men. Had not our Sins increased with our Afflictions, I should have hoped, this Day's Offence had now been fully expiated, by that long Train of Mischiefs that have followed by way of *Consequence*, if not *Retaliation*. But if there yet remain any Dregs of Wrath for us to drink, I know of nothing that can possibly prevent them, or support us under them, but true sincere Repentance, which through the Merits of the Blood of Christ, will wash away all past Offences, reconcile us again to God, and fit us for what future Favours we shall want, either as private People, or a Nation, and he in his abundant Wisdom and Goodness shall see expedient for us.



## S E R M O N

Preached before the KING at *White-Hall*, on  
*Tuesday, Nov. 5. 1700.*

MATTHEW XXIII. 15.

*Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass sea and land, to make one Profelyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than your selves.*

OUR Saviour being sent of God, to reform the World in general, and in particular the great Corruptions that had overspread the *Jews*, his own People, both in their Practice and Opinion, found the greatest Opposition to his good Design from the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who being in great Reputation with the common People for their scrupulous, precise Observance of all the Traditions of the Elders, and a seeming Austerity of Life and Manners, led them where-ever they pleased, and prejudiced them exceedingly against his Doctrine and his Person. He therefore sets himself to undeceive these People, and let them know what false and wicked Men these their Guides and Directors were, and how unworthy of their Admiration and Esteem; that they were not in the least the Men they would appear to be; but endeavoured, in all their Actions, to make a fine Shew of Zeal and Holiness, without any Truth or Substance at the bottom; and covered very bad Designs under these Masks and fair Pretences. Upon this Account it is, that in all his Denunciations of Wo and Wrath to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, he also adds, that they were *Hypocrites*. He says, *They bound heavy burthens, and grievous to be born, on other people's shoulders, but would not themselves move them with one of their fingers*; laid heavy Penances on others that offended, and told them a world of Things were absolutely necessary; but lived themselves at ease, free from that Discipline; *that all they did, was to be seen of Men*, and to receive their Praise and Honour, living wholly to the World, and its Applause and Interest, without any good Design in any Thing they undertook. Amongst other Reproofs, this of the Text is one: That the very Zeal which they shewed in converting *Gentiles* to the *Jewish* Faith, was at the bottom stark naught, and tended only to the greater Mischief of those poor People who were converted by them. *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass sea and land, to gain one profelyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell, than yourselves.*

Which Words we will, *First*, Consider in themselves. *Secondly*, See what Use we may make of them: And, *Lastly*, Make what Application may be proper to this present Occasion.

I. Of the Words in themselves. *To make a Profelyte*, is to gain one over to our Party or Opinion; and for a *Jew* to make a Profelyte, was to convert a *Gentile* from his Belief and Worship of many Gods, to the Belief and Worship of the One and only true God, and called by the *Jews* the God of *Israel*. Some there were, who were thus converted, and went no farther; others were persuaded to embrace the  
*Jewish*



*Jewish* Faith in all its Branches; to be circumcised, and to keep the whole Law of *Moses*, and to be made thereby Partakers of all the Blessings promised by God to *Abraham's* Children. The first of these were indeed Profelytes to Sense and Reason, and returned to Natural Religion, rather than Profelytes to the *Jewish* Faith; any farther than that the Belief of one God was the chief Article of it, and that a *Jew* became the happy Instrument of bringing them to Reason. It is therefore very probable, that the Profelytes of which our Saviour speaks in this Place, were of the latter sort, such as were circumcised, and submitted to all the Laws of *Moses*, and whatever else of Rites and Ceremonies, Customs and Traditions, were then held necessary at home, and preached abroad by these new Missionaries. *To compass sea and land*, is, to take great Pains, to labour hard, and to go a great way, to undergo much Difficulty, and much Hazard, as they who make great Voyages by Sea, and Journeys by Land, are wont to do. *To make one twofold more a child of hell than himself*, is, to leave him in a worse Condition than you found him by a great deal; to make him wicked, and consequently much more liable to Punishment.

We must see a little into the Meaning of this. The bringing *Gentiles* from the Worship of many Gods to the Worship of One and the True one, was certainly a good Work, and therefore is not here condemned, we may be sure, by Christ; and the bringing them to the *Jewish* Faith, to the believing all that *Moses* and the Prophets had said, was still better; for thither our Saviour himself remits the *Jews*, when they would know, *who*, and *what* he was: *Search the Scriptures*, saith he, *for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they which testify of me*. This was the best Preparation they could make to receive him as the *Messiah*, promised by God to the Fathers, and spoken of by *Moses* and the Prophets. Here the Particulars both of his Life and Death were to be found; and upon this Account, the *Jews*, who had these Scriptures in their Hands, and were obliged to read them carefully, are much more faulty in rejecting the *Messiah*, than others could be, who heard of no such Writings, nor received them as inspired Books; and therefore knew of no such Promises or Predictions to be fulfilled. The converting therefore of *Gentiles* to the Belief of *Moses* and the Prophets, was the best Disposition they could put them in for entertaining the *Messiah*, when they should see him coming; and therefore the Zeal of these converting Missionaries, as far as it intended and effected this, was good, and was not condemned by Christ, we may be confident. And because the *Jews* were themselves circumcised by God's Appointment and express Command, and could not otherwise be called *Jews*, nor enter into Covenant with God, nor be Partakers of the Blessings and peculiar Privileges promised them as such; it is very probable, they must induce the Converts they intended to make, that they might be Partakers of the same Promises, to enter into the same Covenant, by the same Way the *Jews* did, namely, by being circumcised; and consequently they must become *debtors to the whole law*, and conform exactly to its own Rites and Ceremonies, as the original *Jews* did. Nor does there appear any thing blame-worthy in all this; for besides that Christ himself submitted to Circumcision, and observed the Law of *Moses*, we find not any where, that he condemned any one for doing the like. And though he intended to abrogate that initiating Sacrament, and all the ceremonial Law of *Moses*, in its proper Time, and might therefore think such Conversions to *Judaism* at such a Time, and so near the Period he would put to it, not very seasonable or necessary; yet it is not to be thought, he would condemn with such Severity and Sharpness, the Zeal of such as should attempt to convert the *Gentiles* to perfect *Judaism*, which *they* thought necessary, and he himself had not as yet declared against, or disapproved.

Since then the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were not themselves the Children of Hell for their being *Jews*, and for believing *Moses* and the Prophets, submitting to Circum-



cifion, and observing the whole Law; we are not to think their Profelytes and Converts became Children of Hell, by becoming *Jews*; and much lefs doubly fo, and worfe than their Converters. But we muft needs remember, that the *Scribes* and *Pharifees* are every where represented by Chrift, as the great Corrupters of the *Jewifh* Faith; they had fo glosfed and commented upon the Scriptures, that Truth was obfcured and loft under them; they had fo darkened Prophecies, that they had wholly laid afide the Expectation of their Completion at their proper Times and Seasons; or applied them fo to other Matters, that the People were diverted to Objects they had nothing to do with, and could not look to the Things that moft concerned them; they had superinduced fuch a world of Rites and Ceremonies to thofe that *Mofes* had commanded them, (which one would have thought had been enow) that *Mofes* would himfelf have hardly known his own Institution; and they were intolerably troublefome, by a moft fanciful Significancy, and became through Weaknefs and fuperftitious Fear, fo neceffary in the moft common Actions of Life, that they were looked upon as Parts of their Religion; and Men became defiled and abominable by Neglect of them, and pure and holy by a nice Obfervance of them; they had made fuch an Exposition on the Commandments, that a Man might almoft keep every one of them in breaking them. Our Saviour tells them, they had made *them of none effect, through their traditions*; and a great part of his Bufinefs was, to bring them again to their old Senfe and Signification; his Sermons were divided betwixt *Ye have heard of old*, and — *but I fay unto you* otherwife.

In a word, the Corruptions that reigned, and had done fo a great while before amongft the *Jews*, were incredibly great, and moft deplorable: And, in truth, their Practice went hand in hand with them; their Doctrines were exactly calculated for Eafe and Liberty, and for Indulgence to Vice and all Enormities. Our Saviour hated Sin with the moft mortal Hatred, becaufe he knew the Mifchief that it did to thofe he loved, and knew what it at length would coft him; but never did a holy Prophet treat Sinners with more Mildnefs, Pity, and Good-nature, with lefs Upbraidings and Reproaches than he, where he difcerned the leaft relenting Tendernefs, or Inclination to Goodnefs. And therefore one may eafily believe, that where he is moved to fpeak the fharpeft and fevereft Things, and to denounce fuch Woe and Wrath, there was the greateft Caufe, and jufteft Provocation for it that could be; and therefore we may conclude, the *Scribes* and *Pharifees* were certainly the worft and wickedeft of Men. This we may take for granted, becaufe the Gospels are fo full of it.

But what is the Connexion betwixt *their* being fo wicked, and their *Profelytes* being as bad, or much worfe? With fome Probability this, — That they who were themfelves fo tainted and corrupted both in Principles and Practice, would infufe the fame corrupt Principles into their Difciples, and form them to the fame Practice with themfelves: They would deliver them the Law of *Mofes*, the Lessons of the Prophets, and the Sum of the *Jewifh* Faith, as they themfelves had learnt it, with all the falfe Glosfes, trifling Comments, unwarrantable Additions, wicked Diffinctions, Relaxations, Difpenfations of Duty, Commutations for Neglect; and in a word, with the whole corrupted Mafs of their Traditions, which made the *Jewifh* Church, at this Time, fuch an Abomination to Chrift. There was all the Likelihood in the World, that People fo very loofe and wicked, would propagate their Errors and Corruptions; and the Difciples then muft needs be as wicked as their Mafters.

To fay the Profelytes would be *twofold more the children of bell*, than they who made them Profelytes, is an exaggerating Speech, and rather condemns the Mafters than the Scholars: They who pretended fo much Zeal, would teach the *Gentiles* fuch a Doctrine as would leave them worfe than it found them; it would pervert their very natural Principles: and that which true Reafon would inftitute them in, and urge them



them to do, would be defeated by Traditions of their Masters, and false Expositions of Commandments which came indeed from God.

I will give an Instance or two of this, because it is of Moment. We are made by God, by standing in need of one another's Assistance, to love one another, and to do each other all good Offices; in this we are instructed by the Light of Nature, and when we are secure ourselves, we need no Command of God to carry us to the helping others in Distress; we do it of our own Accord, and condemn ourselves in the Neglect of it, if we cannot make some good Excuse. This natural Obligation the *Jews* delivered themselves from, by expounding some Commands of God, which forbade them closer Commerce than ordinary with idolatrous Nations, for fear of being infected with their abominable Practices, to such a rigorous and unreasonable Extremity of keeping Distance, that they would not so much as do the common Offices of Humanity to any but *Jews*; they would see a Heathen perish for want of Necessaries, rather than supply him with them; they would not so much as look kindly, nor speak a good Word, much less bestow a Benefit on any one but *Jews*. They were remarkable for their morose, and sullen, and ill-natured Manners, and were equally hated and despised by all the World that knew them. This was not owing to Nature, nor to God's Commands, if rightly understood, but to a false and corrupt Exposition of them, begun in Error, and continued on by naughty Custom, and became in Time a venerable Tradition.

That which follows is much worse. The Light of Nature teaches all the World, without a positive Command of God, to succour and support our Parents Necessity; whether driven to it by Age, Infirmities, by Losses or Misfortunes, it is certainly our common Duty to do it, and nothing can dispense with it, according to our Abilities; but the *Jews* determined, that if a Man had devoted his Estate to the Use of the Temple, or any Part of God's Service, he was then acquitted of his Duty to his Parents; and if they came to him in never so great Distress, and begged his Help, he might answer them, No, *it is Corban*, that Estate with which I might have profited you, is dedicated now to God by Vow, and I can do you no farther Service. Thus, saith our Lord, *have ye made the commands of God of no effect* or Obligation, *by your traditions*. These are plain Instances how the Light of Nature may be extinguished by pretended Revelation; and as plain Proofs, that such a revealed Religion (*i. e.* corrupted so) is worse than *Gentilism*; corrupting their natural Notions of Good and Evil, and putting them on Practices that Reason, whilst untainted, would abhor.

But if these Words are to be understood exactly in the Letter, that the Profelytes would become much worse than they who gained them over, (of which I think there is no Necessity) then we may say, that so our Saviour saw it would actually be, though he assigned no Reason why it would be so: But this we also may ourselves observe, that so it sometimes happens, that People exceed their Masters and Corrupters in their own wicked Way; and outdo their Originals, becoming themselves Examples and great Models of Perfection in corrupt and sinful Practices. But as it is easier much, so it is more probable to think, our Saviour intended, by this severe and angry Scheme of Speech, to say the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, notwithstanding all their Zeal for Conversion of *Gentiles*, had better have let them alone; for that being themselves so abominably corrupt, they could not but make their Profelytes more wicked than they found them, and as bad as themselves, and consequently make them liable to greater Wrath and Punishment than they had been, had they continued in their Ignorance and Darknes.

II. Let us see, in the Second Place, what Use we may make of these Matters. And that will be, at this Time, to observe these Two Things: *First*, That wicked Men



Men may be as full of Zeal as good ones, to propagate their Errors and Corruptions. And *Secondly*, That therefore Zeal is not of itself to be regarded, but with respect to the *End* it aims at, the *Means* it uses to accomplish the End, and the *Effect* that is like to follow.

*First*, Wicked Men may be as full of Zeal as good ones, to propagate their Errors and Corruptions. These *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, so often called upon by Christ, (and always for their Faults) were full of Zeal for converting *Gentiles*; and this is more observable, in that there is no Command in all the *Jewish* Law, obliging the *Jews* to labour for the Conversion of the *Gentiles*; a certain Sign this Law was not intended to be the standing Rule, and the Religion of the whole World. There is indeed Provision made in several Places of the Law, how to receive and use *Strangers*, in case they were willing to become *Jews*; and in the *lxxth* of *Isaiah*, there is a large Prophecy, that Kings, and Nations, and many People should be gathered to them; which may partly be applied to the *Jewish* State before Christ's Coming, though much more properly and truly to the Church of Christ. But there was no Command of God to set the *Jews* upon this Work of gaining them; and therefore the Zeal of doing it was so much greater, in being voluntary; and moreover, this their Zeal was accompanied with many Difficulties and Hazards, it cost them Time and Pains, and much Money; such Undertakings require them all; *They compass sea and land to gain a Profelyte*. No Dangers frightened them, they left their native Country, their Parents and Relations, their Ease, Estate, and all Conveniencies of Life, to enter on a strange Climate, unusual Diet, and a new way of living; they ventured on unknown Countries, People of a new Tongue, new Customs, and new Manners; and it may be, where there were inhospitable Laws and rigorous Edicts against Foreigners, and Death itself denounced to such as would dare to decry the Religion, Gods, and Worship of the Country, and introduce a new Superstition. But neither the Storms and Tempests in their Passage, nor Death in all its frightful Shapes at Sea, nor all the Hazards of their Landing, and continuing in a strange Country, could hinder them from coming to convert them: No Considerations could abate their Zeal; the Desire they had of doing them the greatest Good imaginable, carried it above their Security and Self-love, and private Interest, and all their Fears of Death and Danger.

Here is one among us that pretends to preach up Reformation, and exclaims upon the great Corruption of Faith and Manners that prevails among us, and especially his Superiors, the *Scribes*, and *Pharisees*, and *Elders*: He pretends, above all others, that his sole Aim is the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind. But, Do the Pains he takes, the Hardships he sustains, his tedious Journeyings by Land, or his perilous Voyages by Sea, do these give Testimony to his Zeal and good Designs? Are these like the laborious and hazardous Undertakings of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who compass Sea and Land to make a Profelyte, who think that all is well bestowed, if they can gather up but one poor straying Sheep into the Fold of God's Church?

This was the Zeal of those against whom the Woe in the Text is denounced; they were, with all this Zeal, most wicked and corrupt People; and I think, I need not spend much Time in shewing that Zeal is common to all Men, of all Parties and Conditions, and is never, in itself, a Token of either a good or a bad Man, or of a good or bad Cause, or Design; it is a natural Fervour and Warmth of Temper, raised higher than ordinary by some particular Considerations; and apt to be so raised by that Readiness the Spirits and Blood are always in to Motion. And it has always been observed, that the worst Causes and Designs have been pursued with the greatest Degrees of Zeal, by the worst of Men. Whether it be, that good Men trust too far to the Truth and Justice of good Causes, believing their natural Force and Power to be much greater than they are; or that they think they are so much the Care and Protection of God's Providence, that they



they may slacken their own Diligence, and leave it to him to secure, who loves their Cause, and is very able to look after it, and very much obliged, they think, in Justice and Honour to do it. Whatever it be that occasions it, it is commonly enough seen, that good People fall into Languors, Lukewarmness, and Indifference, and prosecute a good and righteous Cause with more Remissness, and less Zeal than is truly reasonable, or than becomes them; and that wicked People pursue their unjust Designs and corrupt Interests with such Intention of Zeal, such Application, Diligence, and earnest Solicitation, that nothing can stand before them. Zeal therefore, of itself, though never so painful and laborious, and running never so great Hazards, is not to be regarded.

But, *in the Second Place*, respect must needs be had to the *End* it proposes, the *Means* it pitches on, and the *Effect* that is like to follow.

*First*, We must look to the *End* that Zeal proposes, whether it be good or bad, or mixt. The Pretence may be God's Glory, and the Salvation of Souls; the bringing People to the Knowledge of the Truth, and the correcting their bad Manners: This is an excellent and noble End, and worthy of all the Zeal, and Pains, and Hazard, that a Man can take and run; but this must be well looked into, for this is generally pretended to by all Undertakers of Conversion, and makes their Way clear before them; and there is no doubt but the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* recommended themselves to their intended Profelytes by these Pretences, when yet, if we believe our Saviour, they thought of nothing less: They had other Purposes, and were excited by other Motives than God's Glory, and the Good of Souls; they had their own Interest and Vain-glory, and the making Parties. *I seek not yours, but you*, saith St. Paul to the *Corinthians*. But there are Missionaries of another Mind, that seek not Souls, but Gain, or Men for their Estates Sake; and this is always to be well considered. Look well about, what Sort of Countries these great Zealots chuse for Conquests; if it be *Tyre*, or *Sidon*, or *Damascus*, rich and trading Cities; or some obscure and poor, though populous Inland Places; and to what sort of People they apply themselves; whether the noble, generous, and wealthy, or to the poor and meaner ones. Mark if their Children flock to *Swedeland*, *Denmark*, *Norway*, *Lapland*, *Russia*, or to the poorer Quarters of *America*, with so much Haste, and in such Numbers, as to *Mexico*, *Peru*, the *Eastern Indies*, and to *England*. See if the Glory of God and the Good of Souls make so much Noise in the cold and barren *North*, as they do in warmer, and richer Climates, where Men reward as well as God; and yet where Souls are full as valuable and dear to him, as *in the Land of Havilah*, where there is *Gold and Bdellium*, and the *Onyx-stone*. Look therefore well to this, before you so commend the Zeal of those who compass Sea and Land to make a Profelyte; see if there be no Interest at the Bottom.

Another End that Men may have and serve by these Conversions, is, Vain-glory, the Pride and Pleasure of being thought and reported so zealous of propagating the Conversion of the World. It is not to be thought, without searching carefully into the Bottom of one's own Heart, and observing narrowly the Principles and Practices of other People, what strange and difficult Things a Man's Vain-glory and Thirst of Fame and Commendation will put him upon, and make him undergo; what Pains and Labour he will be at, what Hardships he will sustain, for the Reward of empty Praise and Admiration? The Glory of excelling other People, of being eminently singular, and distinguishing one's self from the common Mass, hath occasioned Men to run a thousand Hazards both at Sea and Land, to do a thousand Wonders, and has written at least a hundred thousand Books. Let us make good use of every thing we can; but this light Fancy is a great Ingredient in almost every human Composition. When we go to reason and think in earnest, we can hardly have the Confidence to



charge any one, that he takes great Pains and runs great Hazards to satisfy his Vain-glory, and to obtain the Praise of doing something that other People do not, without intending any other better End; when yet, if the Man would speak his Mind freely, this Principle is surely at the bottom. I make no other Use of this sad Truth at this Time, than to suppose that Men may be stirred, even to undertake the best Designs, by the Desire of Praise and Glory, Approbation and Esteem, and to be thought so zealous of God's Honour and Man's Good, as to venture Life and Liberty to promote them without intending them in earnest. I see no Reason to conclude better of the Missionaries concerned in the Text, their whole Design being to make a good Appearance, and to shew well to the World, and to be praised of Men; and the taking so much Pains, and running so much Hazard, by compassing Sea and Land to make a Profelyte, was as likely to make a Shew of true Zeal, and gain them the Admiration of the World, as any thing else, those Things being the *Tokens* that Men are truly in earnest.

The making Parties is also another End that designing People may possibly aim at, even in making Converts. This indeed does usually follow, whether Men design it or no; the Profelytes do generally adhere to their Converters Interest and Party with great Good-will, with the utmost Zeal and Pertinacity; and are evermore the warmest in defending their new Choice, and in promoting it, and in withstanding and bearing down all its Opposers. This was found true in the Apostles Days, and *Justin Martyr* complains of it in his; and all Men have observed, that the new Converts are still the forwardest and most presumptuous, flaming with Zeal, as if they were to redeem the Time of their Ignorance past, make an Atonement for their former Opposition, or Neglect of Truth; and by something extraordinary, convince the World of the Sincerity and Earnest of their Conversion, making such quick Advances, and such forward Paces, that they may never think of cooling and retiring. This Temper is exceeding fit for Parties, and a rare Spirit for pursuing worldly Interests; and therefore they who have Designs of such a sort to serve, cannot do better than to make as many Profelytes as they can to their Religion, who are thereby engaged most deeply in their Interests.

Next to the *End* of Zeal, we are to consider the *Means* it uses to attain it: For true Religion will not be beholden to Evil, to obtain the Good it aims at; it acts most uniformly with itself, and pitches upon Means exactly just and honest; it pretends not to sanctify, by using them, Means that are in themselves unhallowed and abominable; but takes the Courses that are before acknowledged to be just, and reasonable, and lawful, to compass its End by. If the Glory of God and the Good of Souls be the true End of those who would convert and make Profelytes, the Means must not be such as would dishonour God, and prejudice a Soul disinterested and reasonable, against them. There must be nothing of Falshood, Cruelty, Impurity, or Impiety in them; for each of them are unworthy of God, and unbecoming a good Religion. There must be nothing contrary to our natural Notices; nothing contrary to our Senses; nothing contrary to the common Notions all Men have of good and evil. Whoever, in a word, to bring a Man to his Religion, will use such Means as that Religion does itself abhor and forbid, is not acted certainly by the true Spirit of that Religion, but by mistaken Zeal at least, if not some worse Principle: But because a Man, before he be a Profelyte, will hardly understand thoroughly what that Religion forbids, or admits of, he will be safe enough in rejecting that Religion that countenances Falshood, Inhumanity, impure Practices, or any thing that stands condemned by the Light of Nature, and the common Reason of Mankind.

And so one may say, *in the last Place*; if the easy, natural, or common *Effects* of the Principles of Religion be like to be dishonourable to God, and unworthy of so good a Name, we may conclude against it, and condemn the Zeal that would promote it; for



for true Religion never can in itself, or just Consequence, either dishonour God, or do Mischief to Mankind.

In passing our Judgment therefore upon Zeal, we must not barely regard the Pains it takes, nor the Hazards it runs in compassing Sea and Land to make Profelytes; but seriously respect the *End* it truly aims at, (not what it pretends) the *Means* it uses to compass that End, and the Effects that are likely to follow. All these Things must be considered, when we would understand, whether the Zeal of making Profelytes be truly good and laudable; for if either the *End* be naught, or the *Means* unlawful, or the natural *Effects* of such Conversion be the Corruption of good Manners; the Pains and Labours of the Missionaries, and the Hazards they run, are no good Arguments in their behalf: For the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* took all these Pains, and ventured all these Hazards, and yet were *Hypocrites*; *they compassed sea and land to make a Profelyte*, and all they did by it, was, that they made him worse than he was before; and worse, if it could be, *than themselves*. This is the Use we may make at this Time of these Words of Christ.

III. The Application of what has been said to the Occasion of our present Meeting, may be this. We are to give God Thanks for the Deliverance of this Nation heretofore, from the Contrivance and Design of wicked Papists, to murder King and Prince, Bishops and Judges, Lords and Commons, met in Parliament, all at one Blow; a Work of the most devilish and deliberate Malice, quickest Execution, and most dreadful Consequence that can be thought upon. And, in the next place, to give God Thanks for a Deliverance of the Nation, of a fresher Date, from the Designs of the same Party, to destroy the established Church, (for they pretended Kindness to *the rest*, and they believed them) to overturn our Laws, and govern by a Force that we were Strangers to. Of these two Deliverances, the First was accomplished on this Day, by the Discovery of the *Powder-Plot*: The Second was *begun* by the King's Arrival on our Shoars, in order to preserve our Church, to settle and confirm our Laws, and to have us governed by them. These two Deliverances happening on the same Day, we are to give God Thanks for both of them at the same Time. Now both these dangerous Seasons, and all that came between them, were entirely owing to that intemperate, restless Zeal for our Conversion, with which these Children of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* incessantly pursue us; and for which they compass Sea and Land. And since there is no Plea that sooner makes them Way, and gains them a more favourable Admission, nothing that prepossesses Peoples Minds with kinder Prejudice, than seeing the Voyages and Journeys that they take from Foreign Countries, their Perils by Water, and Perils by Land, their Perils from Strangers, and Perils from their own Countrymen, from Clamour and Ill-will, and Penal Laws, and all to gain a Soul to God, and the true Religion; I thought it not amiss to shew you, what a Zeal the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had to make Profelytes in the like manner, and what Pains they also took to compass Sea and Land for the same Purpose, and yet they were *Hypocrites* themselves, and Corrupters of those they would convert; and that therefore Zeal alone was not to be regarded, without the Consideration of the End, the Means, and probable Effects of such Conversions. Let us, to save a little Time, suppose these Emissaries, who are, in proper Time and Place, as sharp and avaricious as the *Jews*, or *Banian* Merchants, the Masters of Sedition, Turbulence, and Faction, and the greatest Self-admirers in the World; let us suppose them, for once, to be, with respect to us, the most disinterested, undesigning, open, modest, humble Men, that can be; and to have no other Aim or End, than the Glory of God, and the Salvation of *English Souls*; yet what shall we do to justify the *Means* they take to compass this End by? Will the good *End* sanctify Falshood, Villany, and Treachery, the Destruction



tion of all our Liberties and Civil Rights, the Overthrow of all our Laws, and the delivering us up a Prey to the Insolence of arbitrary Power? And if this cannot be brought about by civil Means, by artful Management, and Methods of Persuasion; will it justify such wicked Courses, and such inhuman Cruelties, as were designed this Day, to put an End to so many great and precious Lives among us? Was this the way to save the *Souls* of those intended Victims, had they been purified by this strange Fire, and fitted for the Mercies of the Almighty? The *End*, I doubt, must be forgotten here; and this must be their Way to bring their Children unto God, however ill it go with the poor Parents. But will the Children be inclined to think these Means are proper for Conversion, and for begetting a good Opinion in them of the Religion to which they were invited? What Sort of God is it, that is delighted with these human Sacrifices? Does such a sanguinary Doctrine suit with Christ, who claims from God his Father, and from a soft and tender Virgin-Mother? Will Children be induced to leave the merciful good Principles of Natural Religion, for these most violent and brutal ones of a pretended Revelation? Can these abominable Cruelties make any other Impressions on Standers-by, than those of Hatred and Abhorrence, and a Resolution of flying from them as soon as possibly they can? The *Nero's* and the *Maximins*, the *Decii* and the *Diocletians*, thought this the Way, and took these Methods to extirpate Christ's Religion: They were most happily mistaken. But who would think that *Christians*, knowing this, should fall in with the same Courses, with just the contrary Design? Who would suspect Religion should be planted, settled, and confirmed by Violence, by its great Friends, when its great Enemies use the same to root it up and destroy it? And yet we may defy the whole World to give us an Example (one Example) where *Papery* could, with its own Security, have ruined and destroyed such as would not submit themselves to it, and did not. *Papery* is really an Usurpation on Christianity, and like Usurpers, lives within its Guards, Inquisitors, and Dragoons; it settles and supports itself by Gibbets, Axes, Halters, by Fire and Sword, and all the Instruments of Death, and cruel Executions. As I know there is no Encouragement to these Proceedings from *Christ's Religion*; so I would only ask them Reparations for the great Scandal and Dishonours they do hereby to *Natural Religion*, and to the common Principles of Reason and pure Humanity.

Let us see, *in the last place*, if the *Effects* be answerable to the *Pains* that are taken for our Conversion, when they take Place. How is the Matter mended with us? How is the Glory of God promoted, or the Good of Mankind, or the Salvation of Souls furthered? Do they tell us any thing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is contained in the Scriptures, which we did not believe before? Have they one Article of Faith, of Christ's making, that we receive not equally with them? Or, in the Point of Duty and good Morals, is there one Command of Christ that he enjoins us to do, but we acknowledge we should do it; or one Thing he prohibits us, but what we own we should abstain from? To what new Rule must we submit and turn? If that be not true Christianity, to believe all that our Lord enjoins us to believe, either by himself or his Apostles, to do whatever he commands, and to omit whatever he prohibits, to make the Word of God the Rule of Faith and Manners, to live in Union and Communion with our Pastors, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, rightly ordained, (even by our Adversaries themselves at first, if that will please) and in Love and Charity with one another; if this be not true Christianity, and indeed enough, where are we like to learn what is? And if it be, to what are we converted but *Party*? Is God more honoured by praying to Saints and Angels, than to him alone? Do we as much glorify our Lord, by making a Thousand Mediators of Intercession for us, as well as He? Do we honour and much Pleasure to a jealous God, to pray to any of his Servants for the same Favours and like Graces that we ask of him? Does he regard us  
more



more for kneeling down and offering up our Prayers, not to say Incense, before an Idol or an Image? Does he delight rather to hear his People pray in an unknown Tongue, than with their Understanding? Or is he better pleased with the retrenching of the Cup, than with his own Institution? I have neither Mind nor Leisure to speak to the Particulars in which we differ, the Diminutions and the Additions they have made from and to Christ's Religion, in both which true Popery consists. It is only to my present Purpose, to say, that there is not one Point of true *Popery*, that can make a Man a truer Believer, or a better Man than he was before in our Communion: And therefore, to what are we to be converted? What have we to believe, or what to practise, but what we own ourselves obliged to do before?

How long then, shall we bear these *Scribes* and *Pharisees* among us, that are not only unnecessary, but pernicious to us? One would have thought, that the Contrivance of this Day had so justly provoked our Ancestors, that they would never more have suffered such Incendiaries amongst us; but have executed constantly the Laws they had justly made against them. It is better indeed to repent of Mercy shewn, than of Severity; but it is not good to repent of *that* too often. Instead of Quiet and Security gained by this Relaxation and Remission of *Penal Laws*, the Nation gave this Faction Breath and new Spirit. Unseasonable Condescensions do sometimes provoke to greater Insolence; and Mercy ill dispensed, *i. e.* to vile, ungenerous Spirits, is looked upon as Fear, and encourages to bolder Undertakings. It is now some Ninety five Years since this Conspiracy was to have taken Place; yet from that Day to this, they have not lost a Foot of Ground among us in their general Interest; yet from that Day to this, they have been digging down our Walls and Fences, and undermining our Security; contriving the Destruction both of Church and State. The Nation was delivered on the *Fifth* of *November*, and on the *Sixth* we may well presume they began again to carry on the same Design of ruining our Peace by other Methods, which they have pursued, even to this Day. Our Histories and our Memories are full of the Disturbance they have given us; they have contributed no less than all they could to the Misfortunes both of Prince and People; they occasioned a world of Troubles to one, and terribly embroiled another; and to a Third, their Kindness, Favour, and Assistance, were as fatal, as their Malice and Opposition could have been, had they carried them never so high. Then did this lucky Day shine bright again, and brought a new Deliverance to the Nation; but would they make it only a Deliverance from a present Storm of Violence that was ready to pour upon us? Our Enemies live again, and are mighty; it thundred for a Day or two, and they were frightened, and retired into their dark Recesses; but when the Noise was over, they returned again to their old Business, our Conversion; and have since that, been busy at it, in despite of all our Laws and Statutes; we are indeed delivered from their open Insults, we would be also from their secret Underminings, from their Seduction of our People, their *leading captive silly women, and such as are laden with divers lusts*. What do they here, in a Place, where they acknowledge no King, no Church, no Christians, but themselves and Party, unless it be to give us all these Things, they think we want? Why do they haunt our Sick, frequent our Prisons, and creep into Peoples Houses, raise false Reports, detract from our Advantages, exaggerate our Misfortunes, and reproach our Government? In a word, to compleat our Deliverance, we would intreat those Sons of Zeal, to return again unto their Holy City; and both for ours, and for their own Sake, to spare their painful compassings of Sea and Land, to gain a Profelyte, since they make him thereby a worse Christian, and a worse Subject than they found him.



## S E R M O N

Preached before the Gentlemen Educated at  
*Eton-College*; at *St. Austin's Church, London*,  
 on *December 6. 1701.*

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To my Worthy FRIENDS,

Humphry Gore, *Esq*;  
 Fran. Pemberton, *Esq*;  
 Philip Percival, *Esq*;  
 Will. Cradock, *Esq*;  
 Thomas Betts, *Esq*;  
 John Eekins; *Esq*;

Mr. Thomas Pellet.  
 Mr. Henry Hoare.  
 Mr. Godf. Woodward.  
 Mr. Edward Progers.  
 Mr. James Ford.  
 Mr. Joseph Williams.

S T E W A R D S.

**S**INCE, Gentlemen, it is at your Request alone that I make this Sermon publick, it will lye upon you to make it as useful as you can to your selves and Acquaintance, by following the Advice it gives you yourselves, and encouraging them to do the like. Nothing can do greater Honour to Eton School, than that the World should see those who are educated there, distinguish themselves by Virtue and good Manners, as well as Learning. If this Discourse shall contribute any thing to this good Purpose, it will be worth your while to have asked it of me; if not, I shall have lost my Labour, though not my good Intentions of doing you Service. I am, Gentlemen,

Your Humble Servant,

W. FLEETWOOD.



J O B xxviii. 28.

*And unto Man he said, Behold, the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding.*

J O B is, in this Place, endeavouring to persuade his Friends, that they were mistaken in their Accounts of God's Providence; that this was not the Course he took in governing the World, that the Good should always flourish, and the Wicked always suffer in this Life; that it was the worst Way of judging either of Men or Causes, by Events; since God had not appointed any certain and invariable Rule to act by, but acted always well and wisely to be sure; but yet *by Counsels unsearchable, and by ways past finding out.* That, though he had made Man very curious and inquisitive, given him a large and comprehensive Soul, endued him with Abilities and Powers of great Extent, and that he was a wise, sagacious, understanding Creature, and could search very deep and wide into the Causes and Effects of Nature; yet that the Providence of God in governing the World, in ordering and disposing of Men's Persons and Affairs, was what they never could arrive at, a Thing removed beyond their Reach, a Secret not imparted to the World, but reserved to the Knowledge of God alone. This is the Connexion of this Chapter to the Twenty Seventh going before. You would, perhaps, know, why God punishes some Men, and not all; with the like Questions; but all the Wit and Learning of the World cannot tell you why. *Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for the gold where they find it.* And then he proceeds to sum up several Difficulties, wherein the Wit and Industry of Men had succeeded in their curious and laborious Searches; but Verse 12. *where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?* Poor Man may tire and lose himself in painful and solicitous Enquiries after the Reasons of God's Government, but never shall be able to find the Bottom of that Secret. And to shew it was not to be purchased by him, the seven next Verses are employed to speak the Praises and the Value of this Knowledge; and at last, to put a Stop to all our Hopes and farther Searches, he tells us, Verse 23. *God understandeth the way thereof, and knoweth the place thereof.* He understands, and none but He, the Way and Method of his own Providence; He only knows the Place where Wisdom dwells, which only is within himself; and since he is not pleased to communicate this Knowledge, it is our safest and our wisest Way to rest ourselves content without it; to make no farther Searches after what is hidden on purpose from us, either because it would be useless to us, or else because we are too weak to bear it. But then, that he might not seem to refuse us any thing that is truly excellent and serviceable to us in this mortal State, he imparts to us a Secret more desirable, and better worth our knowing by a great deal; and that is, how to govern and behave ourselves amidst the various and unequal Dispensations of his Providence; that however the World might go, we might be safe if we would; telling us, that if our Searches were in earnest after Wisdom and Understanding, he would direct us so infallibly, that if we would but take the Course prescribed, we should not fail of arriving to what we aimed at. — *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.*

*Secret things belong to the Lord, (saith Moyses, Deut. xxix. 29.) but those which are revealed belong to us, and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law.* How God disposes of his Creatures, and how he orders all Things here, is a secret of the Lord, and will be so; and we, with all our Reason, cannot fathom that Abyss, and therefore it belongs not to us to enquire or know: But what he has revealed, belongs entirely to us, and was revealed for that very purpose, that we might understand and practise it. And that in short is this, *That to fear the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from*



*from evil is understanding.* This it is given to Man to know, this is enough to make him happy; this is sufficient, this is proper for him, this answers all the Ends of all the Wisdom and the Understanding in the World: Nor can the Knowledge of God's Providence, or Way of governing the World, nor the Knowledge of any thing, or every thing besides, compare with this, nor contribute near so much (if any thing at all) to true Happiness; this indeed is Happiness itself; that which gives us Ease and Peace of Mind, perfect Tranquillity and Rest within, whilst we live here, and fills us full of good Assurances and comfortable Expectations for the future, and frees our Hearts of Fear, that troublesome uneasy Passion; all which together make up perfect Happiness.

By *the fear of the Lord*, may be understood the whole of Religion; it being usual enough in the Scriptures, to express the whole of our Duty, by some remarkable and necessary Part of it: Or else it may signify that Principle of Fear on which we act, the very Bottom of all Religion, and without which, there would be no such Thing as Religion in the World: And it is here expressed by *departing from evil*, which are Terms that signify the same Thing; and so are *Wisdom* and *Understanding*. So that though there be two Sentences in the Text, yet they mean but one and the same Thing; for he that feareth the Lord, will unavoidably depart from Evil; and there are Cases wherein Men would not depart from Evil, unless the Fear of God prepossessed their Minds. And he that feareth the Lord, so as to depart from Evil, or that departeth from Evil, because he feareth God, is a wise and understanding Person: So that turn it on which side we will, the Proposition still comes out the same, *That to be religious, to fear God, to depart from evil, is a man's wisdom and understanding.* And this will appear more evident from these following Considerations. *First*, It is that in which all Sides and Parties are agreed, and therefore has the fairest Plea to Wisdom that can be. *Secondly*, It is that without which all other Points of what we call Wisdom, will signify little or nothing. *Thirdly*, It is that which of itself, and without the rest, is sufficient to denominate a Man wise and understanding. *Lastly*, It is that alone which God appoints and designs us to be wise in, and therefore, we may be sure, it is the best and truest Wisdom.

*First*, It is that in which all Sides and Parties are agreed, and therefore has the fairest Plea to Wisdom. All other Parts and Points of Wisdom are controverted; and Men argue with equal Heat, and equal Confidence, and almost equal Reason, one against the other, in Defence of what they like themselves, and in subverting what they disapprove in others. That which is accounted Wisdom in one Nation, is accounted Folly in another, and sometimes little less than Madness; and that which has obtained in one Age with all Assurance possible, becomes in the next a Matter of Dispute at least, and appears in another contradictory and absurd; and Men begin to wonder how their Fathers could be so persuaded, how they came to take up with such weak and ill-grounded Principles, and build such senseless Superstructures on them; how they could miss such plain and reasonable Conclusions as appear at first Sight, and dwell so long in Ignorance and Error; nay, and the Opinions that have reigned for many Ages absolute and uncontrouled, become at length, by some unlucky towering Genius rising up in Opposition, the Matter of as much Derision and Contempt, as they were formerly of Wonder and of Veneration. With what an arbitrary Sway did *Aristotle* rule the World for near two thousand Years? And all the Schools of *Europe*, *Asia*, and of habitable *Africk*, swore into his Words without Premeditation. They did no more suspect his Skill, than they would have done, had *Jove* himself (according to their Fancies) dictated from Heaven: And yet the Wisdom of this Oracle is now become the Theme of Declamation, and it is made a Doubt whether



whether he understood himself or no; and Boys admire at the Succession of his Schools; and at the Number of his Followers; and conclude the World was cheated, or asleep for so many Centuries of Years; and though his Philosophy be the greatest; yet it is not the only Instance of Peoples Levity of Judgment, and Inconstancy of Opinion in the Matters of Wisdom. Others have had their Reigns as well as he, and swayed the Generations that they lived in by the Truth, or by the Reputation of their Wisdom and their Learning; and yet we can recover little of these Men beyond their Names, and those we owe too chiefly to the Confutation of their Wisdom and Philosophy by others; who, either by Revenge or Wantonness, have undergone the same Fortune from succeeding Generations. So that the History of Learning is made up mostly of a continued Series of Confutations of former Opinions, and of new ones substituted in their Rooms, to be in Time and Order served as they were. And so it is in other Matters; the former *Politicks* are now out of Countenance and Credit, and it is thought a Wonder how the World was governed by them; the former *Customs* appear ridiculous, and improper to their Purpose; and generally speaking, all Particulars in which Men are supposed to exercise and shew their Wisdom and Understanding, are either antiquated by Time, and laid aside, as Things useless, or baffled by new Experiments; either one Age confutes the Wisdom of another Age, or one Party controverts the Wisdom of another in the same: And even the Science that pretends to Certainty itself, is subject to this Variation; and Men write Books of *Demonstration* against each other, and shew, (they think) by undeniable Conclusions, the Truth of different and contrariant Propositions. And all these Things have happened, not from foolish and perverse Gainsayers, from Men of little Understanding and great Confidence, from Men that know nothing, and oppose every thing; but from Men of great Abilities, of deep Search and Thought, and equalling, in all Respects, the Parties whose Opinions they dispute against, and whose Judgments they oppose. But it is not so with *fearing God, and departing from evil*; in this, all Ages, Times, and Places are agreed, all Parties have concurred in this, that this is Wisdom, this is Understanding; even they who differ from each other almost in every thing, and one would sometimes think for very differing's Sake, yet are agreed in this; even they whose Practice is stark naught and every way absurd and wicked, yet give their Judgment and their Voice in Favour of this Wisdom; nay, they whose Judgment is as corrupted as their Practice, will give their *loud* Opinion and their publick Voice in behalf of Virtue and Religion, and conclude that it is Wisdom, that they may not be accounted foolish and unreasonable themselves. They will concur in Appearance at least with the Rest of Mankind; which shews, that that is the general and prevailing Notion of the World, in which alone it is agreed on all hands; and therefore certainly it has the fairest Plea to be accounted Wisdom, and to be looked upon as Understanding. If upon proposal of several Opinions of several People, we conclude that to be the likeliest and most probable, in which the most concenter and agree, we were sure to gain the Point in behalf of Virtue and Religion; for they, as yet, have carried it without Contest. This indeed is Matter of Judgment or Opinion only; for if we must conclude by *Practice*, we are as much undone on the other side, and sure to lose the Cause by almost as many Voices; but this is not the way to judge of Wisdom. But yet this Contradiction of Men's Practice, and Defiance bid to their Judgment, make much for the Truth that I am trying to establish; for if neither a continual Habit of ill Practice, nor the Force of ill Examples all around, nor the Profit, nor the Pleasure of Sin, can so far corrupt Men's Judgments, (in the general) as they shall pass them in favour of it; but that notwithstanding all this, and all their other Differences and Disagreements, they concenter all, and terminate all in this, That *to fear the Lord, is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding*: The least we can conclude from hence is, that abstracting from its being told us so in Scripture, it



has in Reason and fair Construction, the fullest Plea to pass for Wisdom in the World.

*Secondly*, It is that, without which all other Points of what we call Wisdom, will signify little or nothing. Not that other Points of Wisdom are not useful and convenient; for they are more than so, they are absolutely necessary to the conducting us in our Affairs, and to the attaining of those Ends, which we are bound to pursue, *i. e.* such Things as we cannot live without, and which yet we cannot attain, without being wise in many Particulars; but this is hereby meant, that even the being wise in many, or in all Instances besides, without being virtuous and religious, will signify little or nothing to the making People happy, which yet is the Aim and End of Wisdom: So that nothing is hereby detracted from Wisdom and Understanding in any good and lawful Kind, if it be in Conjunction with the Fear of God, and Love of Virtue; but without this Conjunction, all other Wisdom is unprofitable, and contributes little to the making People happy; for to be happy, it is necessary to be at ease both in Body and Mind; in *Body* as far as it is possible, but to be sure in *Mind*. And though the being virtuous and religious will no more secure a Man against the natural and certain, or the accidental Evils and Misfortunes of Life; though they will neither make a Man of a stronger Constitution to bear, nor help to prevent most of the Evils that befall the Body, any more than any other particular sort of Wisdom will do; yet Virtue and Religion will make any or all the evil States and Conditions of Life more easy and supportable, than any other Wisdom of any other sort will do. What Ease or Consolation is administered to a Man that lies under the Torture of some sharp and violent Pain, or some vexatious lingering Sickness, from the Consideration and Remembrance of having read a thousand Volumes, of knowing all the great remarkable Events of every Nation, of understanding all their Regiments, their Wisdom, and their Failings? To have searched into the inmost and most secret Recesses of Nature, and have pursued her through all Difficulties and all Obscurities; to have sought out Countries unknown, and to have travelled far and wide throughout the Universe, and have conversed with them in all their several Languages; to have outdone the greatest Masters in their several Faculties, and have exceeded them in each his Excellency; — all this affords a Man in his Extremities but little Comfort, no Joy or Satisfaction rises from any such Remembrances or Considerations: And yet these several Attainments are each of them accounted Parts, and considerable Parts of Wisdom. So that the Wisdom of Religion contributes more to the making People happy, than all the Wisdom of the World besides, as it makes the evil States and the calamitous Conditions of Life more easy and supportable than all the rest can do. But then for the other Part of Happiness, which consists in the Peace and Quiet of Mind, and without which Health itself, and every other Blessing, is as nothing; Religion is infinitely superior to all other Wisdom, both as to getting it, and keeping it: For since to be truly happy, it is necessary to be at ease, to be void of all Suspicion, and freed from Fear of Danger of any Evils that may happen after Death, and that nothing can secure Men from these Fears but Virtue and Religion, it is evident that they contribute all to the making People truly happy, and that all other Wisdom signifies but little. It is impossible but that all Men should be conscious of their Guilt, conscious of offending God; and they must also know, that Punishment is always due to Guilt, and therefore that they are to look for Punishment: This is an unavoidable Conclusion, and the Mind will make it, in spite of all Opposition. And though the Delights of Sin, and the Variety of Diversions, call Men off from thinking on these Matters seriously, and give them frequent Interruptions, so as to hinder them from making close and serious Applications; yet it is not possible for them always to decline these



these Kind of Reflections; they will return, and take their Opportunities, and leave their Sting and Torment in the Mind. This is that which spoils the Happiness of wicked Men, and embitters all their Pleasures; there is something that perpetually haunts them, and pursues them with unwelcome Remembrances; and in the midst of Joy, often dejects the Countenance, and fills the Heart with Sadness: And this, no Wisdom of the Earth can long prevent, or ever remedy; this can be done alone by Innocence and Virtue, and Religion, by the Wisdom that is from above, the Wisdom of *fearing God and departing from evil*. This can only keep the Mind at Ease and Quiet, this only frees it from those Jealousies, and sad Distrusts, that naturally attend Men's evil Practices, and from the Dread of Punishment that Reason tells them must be consequent of Guilt. It is too dangerous a Thing to make the Experiment one's self, and therefore let another be advised withal that has; let him be asked, Whether the Remembrance of having been as wise and cunning in his Dealings, (of having understood the Interest of all Nations, and especially his own, of having read all Books, and travelled all Countries, and spoken all Languages,) as any one whatever, if any such Remembrances as these afforded any Quiet to his Mind, if they vanquished any Fears, or gave him any Hopes, that his Guilt was washed away, that the Punishment of his Iniquity should not overtake him, that he might lie down in the Grave with Peace, and rise again to any Joy or Recompence. If the Reflection on any past Felicities, the Acquisition of a fair Estate, the bearing many honourable Offices, the having contracted great Relations, Friendships, and Dependencies, the having lived a Life of Mirth and Luxury, and having had the World at Will, has been able to lay the least Rising of his Conscience, to prevent the smallest Pang, or cure the lightest Jealousy and Diffidence of Heart? And yet Men think themselves, and the World accounts them very wise, that have so ordered their Affairs, as to be Masters of these Matters, and attain to these Abilities. They are, in Truth, so far from administering any Ease or Comfort to the Mind in its Distress, that either they are never thought upon at all in such a State or Season, or thought upon with Trouble and Concern: But Virtue and Religion feed the Mind perpetually, and cause it to forget all its Afflictions; the Joy of Innocence raises the Soul above Oppression; and a lively Sense of God's Favour relieves Men under the worst Evils and Distresses of this Life. Now if it be impossible to be truly happy without this Ease and Peace of Mind, and that this Peace is mostly wanted, and most serviceable in the Days of Trial, in Trouble, Sorrow, Need, Sickness, or other Adversity; and that all other Parts and Points of Wisdom, single or combined, can in no Measure or Degree afford it, and this religious Wisdom can; it must needs be evident, that this is that without which all other Parts of Wisdom signify little or nothing, *i. e.* contribute little or nothing to the making People truly happy. And since it is the End and Aim of Wisdom to make Men happy, that which contributes little to the attaining of that End, will hardly deserve so good a Name; at least, it will never come in Competition with that Wisdom which attains its End infallibly, as does the Wisdom of fearing God, and departing from Evil. But

*Thirdly*, It is that which alone, and of itself, is sufficient to denominate a Man wise and understanding, without any other Qualifications; and that with as much Reason as any other particular Thing does, in that it aims at a certain End, and pursues it by Means proper and convenient; therein is our Wisdom chiefly seen and exercised, in choosing this End, and in proportioning out and pitching upon proper and suitable Means to the attaining it. And this makes a Man a wise Scholar, and a wise Statesman, and a wise Merchant, and a wise Trader; for Wisdom is not tied to any one Thing alone, but is exercised in any, and in every one; only according as the End designed



signed is more or less excellent and desirable, and the Means of compassing it better or worse, more or less fitted to the attaining it, so is the Wisdom to be accounted greater or less: And therefore the Wisdom of fearing God, and departing from Evil, is on the square with any other Part or Point of Wisdom, with respect to pitching on its End and Means; yet because that End is infinitely the best and noblest End, and because those Means are much the surest Means of compassing their End, therefore the Fear of God, and the departing from Evil is much the best, the surest, and the truest Wisdom. And if any one, although but tolerably good End, and good Means pitched upon, and compassed by them, be sufficient of itself to denominate a Man wise and understanding, the pitching on the best of Ends, and best of Means, must certainly be sufficient to the same purpose. Shall a Man be accounted wise because he knows how many *Kings* governed in such a Country, and what great Accidents befel the States under their several Reigns? Or because he can number up the *Consuls* in their Order, and can, it may be, prove in many Sheets, that such a one's Name is mistaken a Syllable more or less, and his Year assigned him too soon by three or four? Shall a Man be accounted wise, because he knows what Signification such and such a Word bore in the Days of *Ennius*, and how it changed in *Augustus's*, and decayed in *Trajan's*, and was perfectly lost in *Constantine's*? Shall a Man be almost adored, that can tell where the Politicians of old were found defective, and where they acted prudently and safely for the State? Or especially if he himself can foresee a Storm arising, and can prevent its falling there, by otherwise diverting it, or flying from it? Shall a Man be accounted wise, for having by Frugality and Industry, and by indifferent Insight into Business, ordered his Affairs so well, that he is able to live handsomely, and keep a good House, and leave his Children and Dependants well provided for, or having seen them well disposed of in his Life-time; for having amassed a great Estate, by pleading handsomely, or trading cunningly, or venturing luckily by Sea? Shall a Man, I say, be accounted wise for having succeeded well in any of these Particulars; and not be much more so for having done the best Thing in the World, in the best Manner? For having secured an everlasting Interest, by fearing God, and departing from Evil? by making himself as happy here, as Peace of Mind, and a good Conscience, and Security from every Evil and Danger of the other World, and the Hopes of everlasting Happiness can make him? which is more than any, or all the other Instances of the Wisdom of this World can do. And though there are several Exigencies when Men may stand in need of, and desire very earnestly to be wise in such or such a particular Instance; yet when Men come to die, when they begin to think of giving an Account to God, how they have past the Time of their sojourning here on Earth, there is then no Want, no Desire of any other Sort of Wisdom than that of having feared God, and departed from Evil. And yet this is the greatest Exigence, this is the greatest and the truest Trial of the Excellence and Usefulness of any sort of Wisdom that can be: And therefore that which affords the Mind the greatest Comfort, and when it is most wanted is certainly enough to denominate its Master and Possessor wise and understanding of itself.

But, *Lastly*, It is that alone which God designs and appoints us to be wise and understanding in; and then we may be sure it is the best and truest Wisdom. It is that alone which he commands us to seek and to attain; that alone which he has promised to reward; and that alone whose Neglect he will punish, and therefore is the only necessary Wisdom. He hath not any where commanded Men to employ their Time, and Pains, and Study, in the Searches of any Sort of Wisdom but this. He hath given them natural Abilities, and bestowed upon them all the Faculties that are useful and convenient to the attaining any sort of Wisdom; but it is with Design that they



they should all contribute and be serviceable to this main Point, that they should all promote this heavenly Wisdom of *fearing him, and keeping his commandments*. He hath no where enjoined Men to be great Scholars, and wise Statesmen, excellent Lawyers, and dextrous Traders, or any other sort of Calling; but he permits them to be all, or any of these; permits them to be wise in their Generations, and approves their Care and Industry, and blesses them in their Studies, and in the Prosecution of these several Ends and Points of Wisdom, provided they will first be wise towards God, and will first seek and secure the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the only Wisdom he *commands*. And this is, *2dly*, The only Wisdom which he will *reward*. He will indeed reward the Effects of any other Wisdom; but then it is so far only as those Effects contribute to, and serve the Ends of this divine Wisdom. He will reward the Wisdom of a *Statesman*, as far as it administers to the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind. He will reward the Wisdom of a *Judge*, as far as it contributes to the doing Justice to all, to the suppressing Injuries, and helping those that suffer wrongfully. He will reward the Wisdom of a *Pleader*, as far as it contributes to the extricating Truth out of the Entanglements of fraudulent and cunning People, and setting it in its proper Light, and restoring to every one his own. He will reward the Wisdom of a Trader, as far as it contributes to the employing and relieving the Poor, and the discharging honestly the Duty that he owes both to the Publick, and his private Relations. There is no Point of Wisdom that shall go without Reward, if it be well employed; but it is the being well employed, *i. e.* to good and righteous Purposes, that can alone challenge this Reward, and to which alone it is engaged. So that here is no Discouragement to any honest kind of Wisdom, if it will be subservient to the noblest, best, and most superior Wisdom in its several Instances; but still the Reward is to it only as it is a Part of this religious Wisdom. And as no other Wisdom is to be rewarded, so neither will the Want of any other Wisdom but this be *punished*. A Man shall fare never the worse in the other World, for having frequently miscarried in his Business here for Want of Understanding; for having little Reach, slow Apprehension; for frequently mistaking, judging amiss, and without Consideration; and for having been a weak Man: But he shall be sorely punished for the want of this Religious Wisdom; there will be no Excuse or Plea that shall avail in his behalf; this kind of Ignorance will be unpardonable; and this appears most reasonable and just, because it is that of which all the World is capable; it is in every one's Power to be wise towards God, for otherwise it had not been made a general Duty. The obligation of fearing God, and of departing from Evil, had not been laid on all the World, if all the World had not, by God's Assistance, and their own Endeavours, been able to perform it. It had been hard indeed, if God had made any other kind of Wisdom absolutely necessary to be attained by all the World, and given no other Helps than what we see he ordinarily does. If every Man had been bound under the Penalty of everlasting Death, to be a great *Scholar*, a great *Mathematician*, or read in general *History*, or wise in any one particular Instance; we should have been at a strange Loss. If all Men were obliged to be rich and wealthy, and to attain to honourable Office and Employment in the Court, the Camp, or City; these would have been extremely hard Terms as the World goes, and Men would have thought themselves unkindly dealt withal in such a Covenant. But that is not the Case with us; we are obliged to be wise in Matters only that are within our Compass; we are tied to such a Kind of Wisdom as every one is capable of getting, and getting as much as is required of us—and that is, *fearing God, and departing from evil*. These are the Considerations that may serve to establish the Truth laid down in the Text by *Job*, repeated again by *David* in the *Psalms*, and dwelt upon perpetually by *Solomon* in all his Writings, whose Authority, in this Point, is superior to all others, in that he

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would not (though divinely taught) believe, without a thousand vain Experiments, that true Wisdom, and true Happiness, were only to be found in *fearing God, and keeping his commandments.*

I will not allow my self to make a tedious Application of these Articles; they are easy, plain, and apply themselves as soon as mentioned. The Purpose of your Meeting is, to do some Credit to *your selves*, and *the Place of your Education*, and to renew those Friendships you contracted in your younger Age. You can do nothing better to the answering all these Ends, than studying to be virtuous and religious Men; this will make you happy your selves, useful to one another, and reflect the greatest Honours on *your School.*

Fame and Praise indeed will follow Learning without Virtue; but Fame and Praise are far from making People happy; they have made some People very miserable, filling their Heads and Hearts with Pride and Vanity, and Self-conceit, and perfectly over-set them. They have sometimes undermined the very Ground they stood upon, and caused them to neglect those very Parts that raised them; by which we have seen Men of the greatest Hopes, end in Contempt and nothing. Nothing but Virtue can make Learning useful, and nothing else can make the learned happy. See you a Man of great Abilities, whose Mind is not seasoned with the Fear of God and good Principles, and you see him in a Disposition and Capacity of being a mischievous and perilous Creature, unfit for private Confidence and Friendship, or for Society and publick Trust. And as for doing Honour to the Place of your Education, it is impossible, without the being virtuous and religious; that *Second Mother* can neither give it *to*, nor yet receive it *from* degenerate Children. She taught you Languages, and formed you first to Industry and Diligence, to Application and Attention, to Truth and Justice, to Modesty, Submission and Obedience, and every Virtue proper to your Age; She trained you in the Fear of God early; She made you wait upon him frequently, and bid you do it with all the Decency and Seriousness you could, composing your external Behaviour to those great Notions you would one Day have (She knew) of the great Majesty you were before. She taught you to observe the Discipline and Orders of *the Church*, and to revere that Constitution, that is Rival to the purest Ages of Christianity, and the Reproach to, and immortal Hatred of the present Corruption. And what will She not expect from a Soil so carefully and seasonably cultivated? She will expect all that is wise, and virtuous, and religious. And you will give it Her; you cannot otherwise do her the Honour you intend by these Assemblings. † The *King*, whose Birth glorified this Day, has in a publick Instrument declared, that he designed this School should be *Magistra omnium Scholarum.* I dare engage one of his Ends was never better answered, than it has been within our Memory, still is, and still is like to be; all Things concur to make and keep it flourishing. It has excelled all that that Prince could ever hope or wish for, in the Point of Learning, already; (he died before the very Dawn of New Learning) but for his other End, good Morals and Religion, his Hope and Wish will never be exceeded; for being a Prince himself of exemplary Piety and Virtue, he aimed at nothing less than making others so, and so to the last Generation; so that we cannot answer fully to his Aims, without directing all our Studies to the Advancement of God's Glory, and the Good of Mankind, and that is our own Happiness. There is I know not what kind of pleasing Pride, in reading that such a one, famed for his Learning, Wisdom, Piety, and Goodness, was bred in the same Place, where we ourselves were bred; it casts, we think, some sort of Honour on us, and breeds a kind of noble Emulation in our Minds; it *should* do so; we owe it to Posterity, to leave them as fine Examples, as we found, and better yet, if it be possible. And I will not so compliment our Predecessors, as not to think the present Age will furnish out a Number that will shine to future Generations, in all great Qualities and

† Henry VI.



and good, equal to any that have gone before you. You promise this, and you will make it good, by Learning, Virtue, and good Manners. I will make an End without assuming any Liberty to direct you what to do, or what to let alone on these Occasions; your Matter lies before you; you will only give me Leave to say, that though this Day is given to Joy and Friendship, yet it will need a little Care to let it go no farther. We have begun with God, and must not end in any thing that will displease him: It will not become Men of Education, to let To-day's Excess furnish out Matter of Repentance for To-morrow; the Pleasure we propose to find in these Assemblies, would be too dearly paid for at that rate. Nor do I press these Things as Fears or strong Suspicions, but as Cautions, that may not unbecome me in this Place. I should have dismissed you with the Words of *Nehemiah* to the *Jews*—*Go your way, eat, and drink, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared;*—but that I am prevented by the good Custom that has constantly prevailed with you, of making such Collections as become your Qualities, and Liberal Education, and are indeed the Justification, and the Honour of such Meetings. I have, therefore, nothing left to do, but to bless you in the Name of God, and to beseech him to fulfil you with the Riches of his Grace, to make you wise with the Wisdom that is from above, the Wisdom of fearing him, and keeping his Commandments; that you may become eminent in all good Qualities, adorn your several Callings and Professions, do Honour to the Place of your Education, be useful to one another, and to all Mankind; and after a Life made happy here by Piety and Virtue, be so for ever in the World to come.

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U P O N

## M I R A C L E S.

In Two DISCOURSES.

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T O

HENRY GODOLPHIN, D. D.

And Provost of ETON-COLLEGE.

*YOU know (my honoured Friend) that I pretend to have thought a good while upon the Subject of the Book I offer you; and that I have been free enough to blame those who have gone before me, whether Ancients or Moderns, without Distinction or Respect to any Name, how great soever; some, for their downright begging the Question in Debate; others for their Neglect, or slight Solutions, of considerable Difficulties; others for attributing so great a Power to the Devil, as seemed, to me, utterly inconsistent with the Maintenance of Christianity upon the Foot of Miracles; and most of them for leaving us Schemes very defective in some Parts, and very indefensible in others.*

*I have tried to do otherwise, and if I say, I think better, it is that I may not pay you so ill a Compliment, as to present you with what I had not a good Opinion of my self.*

*However, because I may seem to walk in By-paths, and know my self as subject to Mistakes as other People, I do here publicly acquit you of any Concern a Dedication may lay you under, to give me any Countenance, if I am charged with either Novelty or Error; I own I only am answerable for my own Faults; and indeed I will so answer for them, as to amend them presently, upon the first Discovery of them.*

*I have no other Use to make of your Name, than by its Means, to tell every body else, as well as your self, that I have an Affection and Esteem for you, equal to the Obligations you have laid upon me, which yet are greater than all the World besides hath laid upon me. I will leave it to others, to speak of the good Spirit you keep us in at Eton, with relation to the Repairs of the College, and the discharging, in all Points, the Trust reposed in us, by our Religious Royal Founder; of the Pains you have taken in soliciting the Assistance of Benefactors, where the Burthen was much too heavy for us; and of the great Example you set us, in contributing your self to the re-edifying God's House, where he is served in the most beautiful Simplicity and Plainness I ever saw; as far as a Material Temple can be so, it is, I think, the exact Resemblance of the Church of England. These and a great many other Things may be spoken of to your Honour, but not by me, in the Manner they ought; at least not at this Time; and I dare say, you will be content I leave this*



Subject, to come to the Occasion of making these Papers publick; for an Account of that is, as we see, fashionable enough.

I was, some few Years since, thought fit, by my Superiors, to undertake the Defence of Religion against its Adversaries of all Denominations, in the same Place and Manner you have often heard it done so much to your Satisfaction, by worthy Men appointed for that Purpose, who have indeed done great Right to the Subjects they undertook, great Honour to their Noble Founder; and not without great Reputation to themselves. But I was not, (as it pleased God) at that Time, in a Capacity of undertaking any such Charge; however, I resolved to give some Proof, some time or other, that I did not decline that Service, either to spare my Pains, or save my Credit. And as I then pitched (in my Mind) upon this Subject, so I have since (according to my Leisure) prosecuted it, till I brought it to what you now see. And I find since, that I have not been sufficiently prevented by the Labours of any of those Learned Gentlemen; who, though they have, some of them, touched upon the same Subject, have yet left room for me, or a better Hand, to dwell more expressly on that great Proof of our Religion.

As to the Work itself, I have taken more Pains to bring it within this small compass, than would have served to make it a great Book; and to that End, I have made use of no Citations or Authorities, but set them by, on Purpose; contenting myself with Reason and Revelation; excepting in a few of the last Pages, where it was absolutely needful; and yet the Nature of the Work led me, I thought, to use a good deal of Repetition, so that I could not attain to the Brevity I aimed at.

I have made very fair War with such as are Adversaries to revealed Religion, allowing them all that they can ask in the Matter before us. I have made such Concessions, as by unconsidering People will, it may be, be suspected sooner than approved; but I have ever thought this was the Way of dealing with them, or, if not so, that I at least, was not a Man to deal with them.

If any one shall think it worth his while, to consider what I have written, and shall (in a Manner becoming him and me) shew me my Faults, and give more probable Solutions of the Difficulties that occur in considering this Article of Miracles, he shall find how quickly I can change Sides; and that I seek the Truth with such Sincerity, that I care not who it is makes the Discovery, provided I may have a Sight of it. Nay, I shall part (I hope) contentedly with a little Credit, to gain to the unbelieving World the Satisfaction that it thinks it wants, from any other Hand, which it may not receive from mine.

You will excuse me, Sir, for having mentioned these Things in a Letter to you; which had, it may be, better made up a Preface to the Reader; but it was to save a little Trouble. I am with all the Respect in the World,

Your most Affectionate and

most Humble Servant,

W. FLEETWOOD.



# An ESSAY upon MIRACLES.

## In Two DISCOURSES.

### DIALOGUE I.

A. **Y**OU were pleased to tell me, Sir, not many Months ago, that you would find a Time to talk with me, at large, concerning Miracles. I have with some Impatience, waited for it, and hope I have found you now at Leisure, to free your self of that Engagement.

B. You have; and I am now at Liberty, to give you all the Satisfaction that I can, in that Point.

A. Will it not then be necessary, that you should tell me what it is you call a Miracle?

B. *An extraordinary Operation of God, against the known Course, and settled Laws of Nature, appealing to the Senses.*

A. Then I perceive that I must know what are the ordinary Operations of God, what is the known Course, and what are the settled Laws of Nature, before I can be capable of knowing which are Miracles.

B. Yes certainly; for how can you know which are Exceptions to a Rule, unless you know the Rule first? God works no Miracles with respect to his own Power, for all Things are alike hard or easy to him; but with respect to his Laws, and to the Course of Nature settled by him.

A. How must I come to know the Rule in this Case?

B. By your Experience, Observation, and by the Use of your Senses, concurring with the Experience, Observations, and Senses of other People. The Operations that are constant, certain, and expected, are those we call the *Ordinary Ones*. And that is the known Course of Nature, which is the common and the usual one, with which we are well acquainted, and which creates no Wonder in us; and those are the settled Laws, by which Things have been all along governed. I am content you should remember Mr. *Hobbs's* Definition of a Miracle,——He says it is——*A Work of God, beside his Operation by the Way of Nature, ordained in the Creation.* But, unless we know his Operations by the Way of Nature, and how Things were ordained in the Creation, we can never come to know, which and what a Work of God is beside such natural Operation; this we can only learn, by observing how Things have all along gone, and how other People have also observed them to go. For as Miracles are extraordinary Operations of God, besides and out of the Way of Nature, ordained in the Creation, and Appeal to the Senses; so it must needs be that the Senses must be the sole and proper Judges of what the Way of Nature is, that was ordained in the Creation, which only can be known by Observation and Experience.

A. Let me take you right at the Beginning, I pray, that I may give you the less Trouble hereafter. Miracles, you say, being so many Appeals to our Senses, those Senses cannot otherwise judge of them, than by comparing their present Observations and Experience, with their past ones; and if they find that Things are just the same that they have always been, and that nothing new has happened; then they conclude, there is no Miracle. This shews me plainly, that antecedent Observations of the Course of Nature, are necessary to the finding out what Operations are miraculous: And I think it will follow from hence, that nothing new, strange, prodigious, and astonishing, can be accounted properly *miraculous*, unless it thwart the common Course of Nature,  
and



and overthrow some settled Law of the Creation: And therefore, although I *wonder* never so much at it, having never heard or seen the like, nor, it may be, any one else, yet I account it no *Miracle*, because I know of no established Law of Nature that is subverted by it. By this Distinction, I shall save you the Trouble, in our future Discourse, of giving an Account of any Thing, but what is properly *miraculous*. As for that Part of your Description of Miracles, which says, they are *Appeals to our Senses*, I am so well satisfied with it, that I know not what can be objected to it; nor can imagine how it is possible to judge of Miracles, but by our Senses; and shall therefore take it for granted, that where the Senses are not convinced of a Miracle, there neither is nor can be any Miracle. But is it quite so sure that all Miracles are the Operations of God? Can no created Being work a Miracle?

B. Not by its own inherent Power and Virtue, but by a delegated Power it may. The Course of Nature being settled by divine Power, can be unsettled by no less: But God can yet commissionate the meanest of created Beings, with such a Power, if he so please: But then you see they are but God's Instruments, which he makes use of in his working Miracles; and therefore a Miracle wrought by the most superior Angel, is no more his own Work, than a Miracle wrought by the meanest Man living, would be his. Each is the Work of God alike, whatever Difference there may be betwixt the Instruments.

A. How can you tell but spiritual Beings (good or bad) may, by the Laws of their Creation, be Masters of such Force and Subtlety, as to be able to suspend or interrupt the common Course of Nature, to overthrow its settled Laws, and work Miracles? And if they be endued with such a Power, how can we know whether, or when they exercise it? Or how can we distinguish their Operations from those of God?

B. I have said already, that no Power less than that of God, can unsettle that established Course of Nature, which no Power less than his could settle and establish: and that for these Reasons. 1. Because it would argue a Defect of Power or Wisdom, to leave the Laws of his Creation at the Will and Mercy of created Beings; this would not be, to be the Supreme Director, Lord, and Governor, but to have Rivals, Checks, nay, and Controllers of his Will and Empire. 2. Because there could, indeed, no Use be made of Miracles, if any one but God could work them, independently on him, and at their Pleasure. They could not manifest a Divine Power, if any less could work them; nor could they attest to any ones being sent of God, if any other than God could exercise such Power, because they might proceed from one as well as the other. You could not know I came from, and was sent by such a Prince, by my bringing his Seal along with me, if other People had the same Seal, and would lend it to others to use as they saw fit. This I shall have occasion often to insist on; and you will find it so just a Consequence hereafter, that I think you will never be able to deny it; and therefore if you consider the Nature, Use, and Intent of Miracles, you will either find, that none but God can work them of his own inherent Power and Virtue; or if created Spirits had that Power given them by God, yet that they could not exercise it, but by Permission and Appointment; which, whether, and why, it may sometimes be given them, may be Matter of Enquiry, in the Process of our Talk. Let it suffice at this Time, that I affirm, that none but God can work Miracles, but still by what Instruments and Agents he sees fit.

A. May it be seasonable to ask in this Place, whether it be proper to prove the *Being* of a God by Miracles, to such as believe there is no such Thing in the World?

B. Miracles do certainly prove the *Being* of him who works them, because nothing can *act* that does not *exist*. But properly speaking, I think they rather *suppose*, than prove the Being of a God: They *suppose* his *Existence*, and *prove* his *Power*. If you could



could not convince an Unbeliever of the Being of God, from the Works of the Creation, produced with so much Wisdom and Contrivance, and preserved in so much Regularity and Order, according to settled Laws and certain Rules, you would hardly do it from the Interruption of this Order, and from the Overthrow of these established Laws. But however I will not deny, that they may in some Cases, and to some sort of People, be properly produced, to prove the *Being* of a God.

A. But what is the principal and undeniable Use of Miracles?

B. Saving all other Uses, and denying none that may be made of them, I think the principal one is, the attesting to the Mission of any Messenger of God, and giving him Credit with those to whom he is sent, *i. e.* the Man who says he comes from God, and works Miracles to confirm the Truth of what he delivers, is for their Sake, to be believed; because, if none but God can work Miracles, we may well believe he will not exercise such Power, but to the attesting what is true, nor suffer this his Seal to be put to any thing that is false. This is the principal Use of Miracles, they give Credit to them who say they are God's Messengers, and we believe them upon their Account.

A. Will you clear up this Matter a little farther, for you threaten, methinks, to build a great deal upon it?

B. I will; and will use the two great Instances of *Moses* and *Jesus Christ*, and desire you to make what reasonable Exceptions you can to any thing I shall say. When God had signified to *Moses*, his Purpose of sending him to the People of *Israel*, to let them know, that he intended to deliver them from their Bondage in *Egypt*, and also to bid the King of *Egypt* let them go: *Moses* answered and said to God, *Exodus* iv. 1. *But behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice, for they will say; the Lord hath not appeared unto thee.* I am to go by thy Command, and tell the People, that the Lord hath appeared unto me, and sent me to prepare them for the great Deliverance he is now about to work for them. The Message will undoubtedly be very acceptable to them, a People wearied with intolerable Oppressions; but how shall I convince them of my Truth, and shew them that I was indeed sent from God upon this Errand? Suppose that they should say, as probably they will—*The Lord hath not appeared unto thee*: What must I say or do, to prove I came from God? *And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? and Moses said, a Rod. And God said, cast it on the ground: and he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said, Put out thine hand, and take it by the tail; and he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand. That they may know, that the Lord God of their Fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hath appeared unto thee.* The turning a dead Stick into a living Serpent, and the returning of that Serpent to a Stick again, is a Thing so extraordinary and miraculous, that no Power but God's is able to effect it. When therefore the Children of *Israel* see such a Miracle wrought by thee, they will immediately conclude thou camest from me, and will believe I have appeared to thee. This is evident, that the Power of working Miracles which God intrusted *Moses* with, was given him to testify his Mission, to witness to the *Hebrews* that he came from God, and was to lead them from their Place of Bondage, and great Misery, and consequently, that they must obey him.

A. I readily assent to all you say; but must we not also add, that this great Power was given to *Moses*, to convince the King of *Egypt* and his Subjects, that he was sent from God, and that therefore he must let the People go, and sacrifice in the Wilderness?

B. Yes certainly; for so God says himself, *Exod.* vii. 9. *When Pharoah shall speak unto you, saying, shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, take thy rod, and cast it before Pharoah, and it shall become a serpent.*



A. Then I must take it for granted, that the Power of working Miracles was given to *Moses*, to give him Credit both with the *Jews* and with the *Egyptians*; and both of them were obliged, by virtue of these Credentials, to acknowledge he came from God, and consequently to believe what he said to them. But to this, methinks, there lies a plain Objection, that will hardly be well answered: Namely, that *Jannes* and *Jambres*, *Egyptian* Sorcerers and Enchanters, when they were called before the King and Court, to see what they could do, threw down their Rods, which were also turned to Serpents: You know it is said, they also turned Waters into Blood, and also brought Frogs upon the Land, in the same Manner that *Moses* and *Aaron* did before them. Now their Intent and Purpose in thus doing, being, I suppose, to convince *Pharoah* and the Standers-by, that there was no need of believing *Moses*, or of letting the People of *Israel* go, because of the Miracles they saw him work, since they themselves did also work Miracles, and yet declared, that neither was *Moses* to be believed, nor the People suffered to depart: Things I say, being thus, how could *Moses's* Miracles prove his Mission from God, when the Magicians wrought the like, and said, in effect, that he came not from God? Why is *Moses* more to be believed than the Magicians, since they each of them wrought Miracles.

B. I will give you what Answers are generally thought best; but to deal freely, I think they are not fully satisfactory. First then, it is said, that the Rods of the *Egyptian* Sorcerers were not turned into *real*, but *appearing* Serpents; and that the Devil, who is a powerful and a subtle Spirit, helped his Servants in this Case, and so imposed upon the Senses of the Standers-by, that to them the Rods appeared to be Serpents, though indeed no real Change was effected.

A. Let me say, as I think an *Egyptian* might, to such an Answer, that this is really what we call *begging the Question*. What if one of *Pharoah's* Courtiers should reply after this manner; "You say, that *Moses* his Rod being turned into a Serpent, gives an assured Testimony to his Mission, and shews convincingly, he came from God, and ought to be believed: But here you see, that our *Jannes* and *Jambres* deny his Mission, and have turned their Rods into Serpents as well as he, and therefore are to be believed as well as he. You tell us that our Senses are deceived, and imposed upon by Diabolical Illusions; we say the same of *Moses*, and do affirm that your Senses are as subject, and as like to be imposed upon as ours. You judge by your Senses, that *Moses's* Rod was turned into a Serpent, because it appeared to be a Serpent by its Colour, Shape, and Motion: The *Egyptians* use their Senses as well as you, and to them, their Sorcerers Rods are turned into Serpents, as they judge by the like Colour, Shape, and Motion." I do not know what could be answered to this Courtier, in favour of *Moses*, that he would not honestly apply to *Jannes* and *Jambres* also: And therefore I am of the Mind to think them all true Serpents alike, but am still ready to be better informed.

B. Secondly, the Devil, it is said, did secretly steal away the Sorcerers Rods, and in their stead, as secretly convey true Serpents.

A. What if he did? might he not as well do so with *Moses's* Rod too? or at least, it is as easily said by an *Egyptian*, that he did so to *Moses*, as by an *Hebrew*, that he served the *Egyptians* so; and I am afraid this Answer gives us no Advantage. But where were the *Hebrews* and *Egyptians* Eyes all this while, that they made no Discovery of this Fraud? Can the Devil so impose upon the Senses, as that, if Men attend, they shall not discern his Cozenage, and see when he removes Rods, and substitutes Serpents in their place? If so, how is it possible to judge of Miracles by the Senses? and if the Senses may be so deceived, how are we sure that *Moses's* Rod was turned indeed into a Serpent?

B. Why, that seems plain, by his eating up all the other Serpents.

A. Not



A. Not plain at all, if the Senses are not to be trusted: For he that can remove a Rod from before my Eyes, and bring a Serpent in its stead, and I not see him do it, though I look on all the while, can as easily make me believe he eats that Serpent up, though he really touch it not; it is but deceiving the same Sense. To speak what I think, I wonder much, that so many Learned Men should take pains to solve this Miracle of the Rods, when there remain two others, as hard to be accounted for as that; namely, the turning Water into Blood, and the bringing Frogs upon the Land, as *Moses* did before them; for this the Scripture assures us the *Egyptian* Sorcerers did. And will any one say, this Water was not turned into true Blood, nor real and substantial Frogs brought up, but that the Senses of the *Egyptians* were all this while imposed on by the Craft and Dexterity of the Devil? If any one shall affirm this, the *Egyptian* Courtier will again require, how it came to pass, that his Countrymens Senses were only to be imposed upon, and those of the *Hebrews* remained clear, and not to be deceived? and I am sure I could not give him an Answer that satisfies my self.

B. But you see that *Jannes* and *Jambres* turned but a little Water into Blood, and brought up but a few Frogs; whereas *Moses's* Performances of these Kinds were marvelously great.

A. I do not see that very clearly; but I will take it for granted that so it was, and ask you, whether it is not, in Nature, as easy to turn six hundred Gallons of Water into Blood, as six Quarts? and to bring up a Million of Frogs, as four and twenty? Out of the Way of Nature, all things seem to me, alike impossible, or alike possible. Bring me a Man or Spirit, that can make a Fly, by his own Power, and I will shew you one that can make an Elephant. I believe you will own, that had the Water-pots at the Marriage-Feast of *Cana* in *Galilee*, held but two or three Pints apiece, the Miracle of Christ the Lord had been as great, as it was (in turning the Water into Wine) when they contained each of them, two or three Firkins.

B. I agree with you; and therefore think, as you do, that all such Solutions of Difficulties had better be spared, since they satisfy none that search Things thoroughly. But what do you say to this, that the *Sorcerers* could not remove the Plagues they brought upon the Land, which *Moses* did? and therefore you see that *Moses* wrought the greater Miracles.

A. Excuse me, Sir, if I can only see that he wrought more than they: For that those he wrought were greater than those the *Sorcerers* wrought, is not easy for him to see, who believes it requires as much Power to make a little Serpent, as a great one that can eat him up; to turn six Spoons full of Water into Blood, as six Quarts; and to bring up ten Frogs, as ten thousand.

B. You are then of Opinion, that there is no Difference betwixt great and little Miracles; but sure, more Miracles will argue a greater Power, than a few will. What say you to that?

A. I have already said, that out of the Way of Nature, all Things are alike possible; and that he who can make an Eel, can make a Dragon if he please; he who by his own Power can give Ears and Hearing to the deaf, can as easily restore Sight to the blind, if he think fit. And as for more Miracles arguing a greater Power than a few, I must, by my Principles, be persuaded, that more Miracles do not argue a greater Power than a few, but argue a longer Use, and more frequent Exercise, of the same Power: Thus, to turn Water into Blood, is a Miracle, and so it is to turn that Blood into Water again; I know not which is the greatest; but he who does them both, works two Miracles; but he who works but one, has as great a Power as he who has wrought two, because he has the same, though not so long continued, or if you will, not so often renewed to him. And though the working many Miracles, will naturally gain greater Authority; yet that is, because more People are concerned, and come



to the Knowledge of them; and they who have seen more, are better assured that their Senses were not imposed upon, than if they had seen but one; for if they were certainly persuaded, that one was certainly wrought, without Fraud, the seeing more wrought by the same Person, would give him no greater Authority with them, than he had before. Thus, if you or I should have seen our Child raised from the Dead, we should as fully believe the Person who did it, as if we should see the same Man raise also five more Children from the Dead; but then this Person would gain more Authority with other People, who were related to these five Children, or were Spectators of these great Works. You see I take the Liberty you gave me, of making what Objections I can; but it is, that I may receive the greater Satisfaction from your Answers, for it is Truth alone I seek. What Credit therefore could the Miracles of *Moses* give him, when the Magicians wrought the same, in Opposition to his Authority, if three Miracles argue as great a Power as thirty, and those three were attested by the same Senses that the thirty were?

B. I cannot, I assure you, get over all these Difficulties, with as much Ease as other People do, or rather think they do. If those, which the Sorcerers wrought, were true Miracles, they were either wrought by the Power of God, or of the Devil. If by the Power of God, then God wrought true Miracles to confront the Authority of *Moses*, whose Authority he, at the same Time, established by other true Miracles, and so will be found acting in Opposition to his own Designs. If by the Power of the Devil, then can the Devil work true Miracles in Opposition to God; and how shall we come to know which are of God, and which are of the Devil? and consequently, how shall they attest to the Truth of any Doctrines, if Powers so opposite can work them? And on the other hand, if the Miracles wrought by the Sorcerers, were only Cheats and meer Illusions of the Senses, how shall we do to distinguish betwixt true Miracles, and *appearing* ones only, since the Senses, by which alone we can judge, may be so easily imposed upon, as to take *Appearances* for true and real Miracles? Either of these Suppositions, carry Difficulties along with them. I can only promise to do my best to clear what I can of them. I maintain then, *in the first place*, that the Devil himself cannot work a true Miracle independently on God, or by his own innate Power; and this, for Reasons before laid down, *Page 128*. *Secondly*, I assure myself, that he can impose no false ones on our Senses, if we exercise them as we may and should, and take that Care, and use that Circumspection that it is in our Power to do: Because it would be the same Thing, for God to permit the Devil to work false and cheating Miracles, and by them to impose upon our Senses, rightly exercised, as to let him work true ones: But of this, I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter. *Thirdly*, I believe that when the wickedest of Men work Miracles, they never do it by a Power derived from the Devil, but are the Instruments which God is pleased to use, and have their Power from him alone; for if the Devil cannot himself work Miracles, he cannot commissionate another to do them, nor communicate a Power that belongs not to him. However, I believe that Men are, through their Folly, Ignorance, and great Wickedness, so seduced, as to believe the Devil has such a Power himself, which he can also communicate to them; and that whenever they do any great Matters, they think they do them by a Power derived from that bad Spirit, and that they are assisted by him: And because the End these People aim at, is always evil, and the Effects mischievous, the World is also inclined to attribute all such Works to the Power of the Devil: Not thinking, perhaps, that this would be to erect a Power equal, and corival with that of God Almighty; and forgetting, that God may have his Ends to serve, in permitting very wicked Men to be his Instruments, and to work Miracles, though they know nothing of him, nor intend him any Honour, but think, at that Time, of serving another Master, and that they act by another's Authority. If  
my



my *first* Proposition be true, that the Devil cannot of himself work Miracles, this *third* will follow unavoidably, that others cannot, by any Power derived from him. But this does not hinder me from believing, that God may sometimes use both wicked Spirits and wicked Men, as his Instruments, and work Miracles by them both, if he please. Upon these Principles I find myself obliged to believe, that these *Egyptian* Sorcerers turned their Rods into Serpents, the Water into Blood, and brought up Frogs upon the Land, by the Power of God alone, whatever they might think, or by whose Power soever they believed they acted.

A. I am very loth to think otherwise, for the Sake of Consequences that I cannot endure: But upon this, I must ask you two Questions. *First*, If these Sorcerers did not believe they could work such wondrous Changes, how came they to be called by the King to do them, and how came they to attempt it? One would be inclined to think, that their former Successes in this kind, had prepared the King to expect it, and emboldened them to attempt this great Work. *Secondly*, What Account can you give of God's working these Miracles by the Hands of these *Egyptians*, to confront the Authority of *Moses*, and in Opposition to his own Design, which was, by Miracles, to give him Credit with the Court of *Egypt*, and with his own People?

B. If I could answer these Questions satisfactorily, all Difficulties else, I think, would vanish: But you must be content with the best I can, at present, do. In Answer therefore to your first Question, I say, that the *Egyptians* were, of all Mankind, the most addicted to Enchantments, Sorceries, Predictions, and all that strange and idle Trade of dealing with the World of Spirits and Powers invisible: I pretend not to know how it came to pass, that they were busied more about these Things than other People; but so we find in all our Histories, that it was in Fact; and all the World, especially the *East*, endeavoured to learn these Matters of them. And *Moses* being learned in all the Learning of the *Egyptians*, was, I believe, accounted a Magician also, among them: as *Daniel* afterwards, and the three Children, by being brought up in the Palace of the King of *Babylon*, and taught the Learning of the *Chaldeans*, (*Dan. i. 4.*) came in time to be reckoned up with, and accounted amongst the rest of the *Magicians*, *Sorcerers*, and *Astrologers* of the Realm, and were accordingly consulted upon great Occasions, *Chap. i. 20. ii. 18. iv. 9. v. 11.* *Moses*, I say, being brought up in *Pharaoh's* Court, and, (as *St. Stephen* says) *learned in all the Wisdom of the Egyptians*, which ran exceedingly to Mathematicks, Hieroglyphicks, and sublime Sciences, was very probably accounted a Magician, even before he made these great Experiments.

A. This I never considered before; but when I find that he was forty Years old, before it came into his Heart to visit his People, and that he was all that while bred up at Court, and in the *Egyptian* Manners and Learning, I am inclined enough to think, he differed very little from other *Egyptian* Students. It is not at all plain what Notions he had of God himself, till God appeared to him; or at least, till he fled from *Egypt*, when being come to Years, (which were forty, by comparing *Exod. ii. 11.* with *Acts vii. 23.*) *he through faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's Daughter.* Considering all these Things, I think it not improbable, that the *Magicians* who knew *Moses*, his Education, Masters, Studies, and Learning in all the *Egyptian* Wisdom, should think him like one of themselves: But I know not what Use you will make of this, supposing it all to be true.

B. No other Use than this, that *Pharaoh* should think the *Magicians* of his Court equal to *Moses*, and should therefore send for them, to see what they could do; and that the *Magicians* should believe so too, and thereupon attempt to do as he did: They had probably heard, that *Moses's* Rod was turned into a Serpent, to convince the Chil-



dren of *Israel* of his Mission, before he practised in the Sight of *Pharaoh*; and therefore when called by him to do the like, they came prepared with Rods, and with their muttering Incantations, threw them on the Ground, in the same Manner that *Moses* did: And in their other Performances exactly imitated him, as appears from their *stretching out their Rods, and smiting the dust of the land*, to bring forth Lice, just as *Moses* did before them. So that I do not see there is any Necessity, that their antecedent great Performances, should have disposed the King to expect they should work Wonders now, nor have emboldned them to attempt the doing the like again, whenever called upon to do it. But, that thinking themselves in all points as great Men as *Moses* was, they should hope to do all that he did. This I think may be sufficient to account for the Boldness of their Attempt; I would I could as easily account for the Success of it. It is no great Matter for Men of a forbidden Curiosity, ignorant of the Ways of God, and brought up in a dreadful Superstition, and Persuasion of the Power of Spirits and Demons invisible, to believe they can do great Things by their Invocation, and abominable Rites used towards them. But how it comes to pass that God permits them, by such wonderful Events, to continue in their Delusion, is a Thing not easy to solve; but yet I will attempt it, in Answer to your second Question, which was; Why God should work three great Miracles by the Hands of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, to confront the Authority of *Moses*, which he established by great Miracles; acting as it were in Opposition to himself and to his own Design, which was, to give him Credit with the *Hebrews* and *Egyptians*? I must then premise, *in the first place*, that if no sufficient Reason could be alledged, why God should permit these wicked Sorcerers to work three great Miracles, it would not prejudice the Cause in hand; it would not follow from our Weakness, that he did not actually permit them; the Matter of Fact is certain. Nor would it follow, that they wrought them by the Power of Satan, and his Assistance; for that I take for granted, believing firmly, that if God had given the Devil that Power at large, no Miracles could be of use to testify the Mission of his Prophets. But this would only follow certainly, that God can do himself, and permit others to do many Things, of which we can give no Account, and for which we can assign no sufficient Reason; a Consequence we need not be ashamed of. But, *secondly*, we may conjecture, that God might permit these Sorcerers to work three Miracles, the better to convince them, that there was a Power superior to all others, to that of Nature, or whatever Spirits or Demons they had before trusted to, or thought themselves assisted by; for we may well believe, they had never wrought such Miracles before, if any at all; and this Power they might find to be the same that assisted *Moses*, and thereupon might conclude, that this Power was able to deliver the *Hebrews* out of *Pharaoh's* Hand, and therefore might persuade the King, (who advised with them, and trusted much to them) to let the People go, and sacrifice, as required. I do not find there is any thing hard or absurd, in supposing these Magicians convinced, by the Miracles they wrought themselves, of a Divine Power, superior to any they had tried or known before, and that this Power was the same by whose Assistance *Moses* wrought his Miracles, as they did theirs; and this being laid, the rest might follow easily.

A. But, when they came to turn the Dust into Lice, as *Moses* had done, and found they were not able to do it, they cried out, that *this was the finger of God*: Does not this signify, that they did not, till now, see or believe the Hand of God was in it? and consequently, were not convinced, that God wrought these three Miracles, either by *Moses* or themselves; but that they came to pass by Art Magic, or they knew not how.

B. There is an Appearance of Truth in what you say; but in my Opinion, a little Reason and Observation might suffice to shew them, that the Hand of God was full as great



great in turning Rods into living Serpents, Water into Blood, and bringing up Frogs upon the Land, as in turning Dust into Lice, whose Matter may seem much more prepared for such a Change, than that of the other Bodies for the Changes which they underwent. Can any one imagine, there is more appearing Difficulty, in turning Dust into Lice, than a little Wand into a Serpent? or can one find, that the doing the first should shew the Finger of God visible, and the latter require no such great Power to effect it? I do therefore think, that now was the Time they went to *Pharaoh*, to tell him, that the God who wrought these Miracles, was certainly the most powerful of all Beings, and therefore that his Servant *Moses* must be hearkened to, and the *Hebrews* suffered to depart; after they were sufficiently convinced themselves, that the Power by which these Miracles were wrought, was able to do what he pleased, they endeavoured to persuade the King; but the Text says, that *he hearkened not unto them*. They found indeed, that they could work no more Miracles; were they *thereby* convinced, that those they had already wrought, were not wrought by God? then must they also think, that those of *Moses* were no better than their own, and consequently were not wrought by God. If they had seen any great Difference betwixt the Miracles of *Moses* and their own, they would have seen at first, that the Finger of God was in it; but seeing no such Difference, they might well conclude they were both wrought by the same Power, and came to acquaint the King with it. When therefore they say—*this is the finger of God*, I would not understand them to mean, *this turning dust into lice is the finger of God*, in contradistinction to the other foregoing Miracles, as if *they* shewed no such Finger or Power of God—but—this whole Transaction, all this powerful Operation, all these Miracles together, evidently demonstrate, that the Hand of God is in this whole Matter, and that none but he could bring such mighty Things to pass, and therefore it were best to yield to this invincible Necessity.

A. So that you imagine, God permitted these Enchanters to work some Miracles, in order to convince them of his Almighty Power.

B. I do so, and cannot tell how any Man could resist such Evidence: And I think their Disappointment in attempting the fourth Miracle, served the better to persuade them, that the foregoing ones could not be wrought by Art Magic; for if they could, they might have still gone on; for I say again, that to turn Dust into Lice, has nothing greater, nothing more apt to deter from undertaking it, than the turning Rods into Serpents, or Water into Blood. But the being stopped, might only convince them, that the Power which had hitherto assisted them, would no longer do it.

A. Methinks, you quickly turn these Magicians into very good Men.

B. Not so fast, I beseech you: for there is no need of thinking better of them, than that coming with impious and diabolical Intentions to overthrow the Authority of *Moses*, they were soon convinced both by his, and their own Miracles, that the great God was the Author of them, and went and told the King as much: I know not of any farther Influence these Things had upon their Minds. And we find *Chap. ix. 11.* that these Magicians were themselves plagued with the Boils, and could not stand before *Moses*, so that though they acknowledged the Power of God, yet they were not thereby made the better Men. You know it is no new Thing, for God to serve himself of his Enemies, and to constrain them to confess his Power and Majesty. But this is all the Difference betwixt me and other People, that they make those Enchanters acknowledge the Power and Finger of God, in the turning Dust into Lice; and I make them acknowledge them for *that*, and all the Works that went before it; for these they wrought themselves, as well as those that *Moses* wrought. And you must still remember, that I call all this but a *Conjecture*, and am only *guessing* what Reasons might move God to suffer these Enchanters to work three Miracles: And this I thought might



might pass for one, that they might thereby be convinced of his Almighty Power, and Superiority over all the Laws of Nature, that *Moses* might find Credit with them, and the *Hebrews* be suffered to depart, as God commanded. But if this Reason be displeasing or unsatisfactory, let us see what we can make of another, which I will also call but a *Conjecture*; and that is, that God might permit these Sorcerers to work these three Miracles, to harden *Pharaoh's* Heart, and make him still more obstinate in his Resistance and Refusal to let the People go.

*A.* To tell you the Truth, I should be very much troubled, that you should make this good, it looks so strangely (to say no worse) on God's Part: But I know not how to reject a Truth, (if it can be plainly made out) for the Sake of an untoward Consequence.

*B.* It is not for you or me, to make what Truths we like, but to make the best Use we can of what we find made to our Hands. Let us look into the History as carefully as may be. *Egypt* was certainly the Spring and Fountain of Idolatry, the very Sink of all impure Abominations both in Worship and in Practice; you cannot read of it in sacred or profane Histories, but you will find this Character made good. The King of it, to all his other Wickedness, added the most violent and cruel Oppression of the *Hebrews*, who were his born Subjects; and certainly, nothing can more provoke a merciful and just God to Anger, than to see a Prince who is appointed by him to do Justice, and shew Mercy to all his People, and to make them happy under a wise and righteous Administration; to see him exercise his Power in plaguing them, and making them most miserable, by most exorbitant Exactions, and a most rigorous and unjust Oppression of their Liberties. This was the Case of *Egypt* and its King, with respect to *Israel*, as you may see *Exod.* i. 13, 14, 16. For these Reasons, God did justly resolve both to punish *Egypt*, iii. 7, 8, 9. and resolve moreover to make his Punishment remarkable, and his Judgments most notorious, that all the neighbouring World might see, and dread the Example. He was now also about to execute his Promise made to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, to give their Seed the Land of *Canaan*, to establish them a People, and set up his Name amongst them. To make them the more remarkable in the Sight of all the Nations round, he resolved to bring them out of Bondage, with an high Hand and stretched-out Arm, that every one might see the singular Favour he bore to them. And to this End he intended to work great Miracles, which he foresaw *Pharaoh* would harden himself against, but which would make the Deliverance more conspicuous, in the Eyes of all the World.

*A.* I must then allow, you think, that when a Nation has, by its crying Sins and Wickedness, made itself fit for God's Judgments, he may, with Justice, execute them upon it, in such a Manner as shall tend most to his Glory, the Discouragement of Sin, and the shewing forth his Hatred of it, even by giving them more Opportunities of offending against him, and opposing his Will, although he know they will make that use of his Judgments and Inflictions.

*B.* You must; and I hope you see there is no Iniquity in such a Proceeding, supposing these Judgments are justly due, and a Punishment but equal to their Offences. Now all these Miracles that were wrought in *Egypt*, produced those Judgments that were to punish its Offences; and though God certainly knew that they would have no Effect on *Pharaoh*, but hardened him the more to a Refusal of complying with his Will, yet were they but just Expressions of his Anger, and a just Punishment of their Wickedness. Consider these Plagues by themselves, and you will find them due to the Sins of *Egypt*; consider them as wrought miraculously, and then they were to let the King and People know, that God was the Author of them, and intended thereby to punish them, and to obtain his Will of them, in case they would not hearken to his Servant *Moses*.

*A.* But



A. But God's foreseeing that these miraculous Judgments would not move the King, but harden his Heart farther, and yet continuing to multiply them, makes it look, as if he designed to harden him the more, to make him fitter for more Judgments.

B. I think not; and if you consider well what has been said, you will find, that God brought upon *Pharaoh* these miraculous Judgments, not to harden him the more, but to shew his Hardness the more to the World. They were just Punishments for past Offences, and Cautions against farther Obstinacy; and God's knowing that *Pharaoh* would be but the more hardened by them, does not shew that God intended thereby to harden him the more; nor did the Use that God knew *Pharaoh* would make of his Judgments, make it more reasonable for him not to inflict them, when due.

A. I am glad of this, that God did not harden *Pharaoh's* Heart on Purpose, by working Miracles; but that he wrought them for other justifiable Ends; though he knew *Pharaoh* would indeed be hardened by them: I may say then, that these miraculous Judgments, were the Opportunities of shewing *Pharaoh's* Heart intolerably hardened, who would not be moved by them: And I may say, that this is the Reason why God, in many Places of Scripture, is said to harden *Pharaoh's* heart, though in as many more, *Pharaoh* is said to harden his own heart. But pray what is all this to his suffering the Sorcerers to work their Miracles? I am not very clear in the Connexion of these Matters: Let it be allowed, that *Moses's* Miracles were wrought for these Ends, and God's Proceedings justified in dealing with this wicked King and People; yet what does this relate to the Magicians doing so great Miracles?

B. The Order and Connexion of Things is this. I was conjecturing, that God, it may be, might permit the *Egyptian Enchanters* to work three Miracles, (as he permitted *Moses* to work eleven) that *Pharaoh's* Heart being thereby the more hardened, he might carry his Resistance higher, and God might gain the greater Glory by the Deliverance of his People, with more astonishing Signs and Wonders, and the World take much greater Notice of his Power and Majesty. At this you were uneasy, that God should be thought to work Miracles, on purpose, as it were, to harden *Pharaoh's* Heart; and I was endeavouring to shew you, that there was no Iniquity in this Proceeding on God's Part, because these miraculous Judgments were but just Punishments of *Pharaoh's* great Wickedness, and impious Obstinacy; and that although God knew he would but harden his Heart the more under them, yet it would nevertheless be just to inflict them, and God would serve himself of this Hardness, to great Purposes. And if this might be allowed of, with respect to *Moses's* Miracles, it might also be allowed with respect to those of the Enchanters, whose working Miracles did also harden *Pharaoh's* Heart, as appears, *Exod. viii. 19. Then the Magicians said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of God; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkned not unto them.* He was neither moved at the Miracles they wrought, nor at the Confession they made, that they were wrought by the Finger of God, and the Stop they found to their working any more. He hardened his Heart under every thing that was said or done, by them, or *Moses*. I look upon their Case to be much the same with that of *Moses*; so that if God might, with Right and Justice, work Miracles by *Moses*, to harden *Pharaoh's* Heart (in the Sense before mentioned) he might do the same by the Magicians; and it seems to me, a great Aggravation of his obstinate Impiety, that when his own Servants (who came with Minds as ill disposed as his) came and told him that the Finger of God was in all these Operations, and that they were themselves convinced of the Truth of *Moses's* Mission, that he should not hearken to them, but harden his Heart the more for what they said to him.

A. I yield you that, that *Pharaoh* was a very wicked Prince; but we are now, methinks, come to the Force of the Objection that I first made—that *Pharaoh* could not be so much to be condemned, for not being convinced by the Miracles he saw wrought,



wrought, by reason he saw them wrought in Opposition to each other. *Moses's* Miracles were to convince the King that he came from God: Let us see (says the King) what our own Magicians can do, before we give this Man Credit, and let them first be called. You know, that when they came, they did as *Moses* did: Why is *Moses* now to be believed more for his Miracles, than the Magicians?

*B.* Because the Magicians came themselves to the King, and confessed, that *Moses* wrought his Miracles by the Finger of God.

*A.* Did they at the same Time confess, that they themselves had but cozened and imposed upon him and his Court, and had indeed wrought no Miracles, all the while he thought they had? This Ingenuity might have had some good Effect upon him.

*B.* *Pharaoh*, you may be sure, was Judge of that; had they not wrought true Miracles, he could not have hardened his Heart under them, as the Scriptures say he did. The best of your Objection is, that the Miracles the Magicians wrought were true Miracles, and therefore how could the Miracles of *Moses* convince them, when the Magicians wrought true Miracles in Opposition to him? He must therefore believe neither. And the best Answer to this, that I can think on, is this, that the Magicians did as good as confess, that the Miracles they had themselves wrought, were wrought by the same Power of the same God, and to the same Intent that *Moses's* were wrought, namely, to punish *Egypt* and its King, and to convince them that *Moses* was to be hearkned to, and the *Hebrews* suffered to depart, as God required. For though the Magicians came with wicked Dispositions, to set themselves against *Moses*, and used all their wicked Arts and Incantations, Mutterings, and diabolical Ceremonies, to work Miracles equal to those of *Moses*, and might perhaps think at first, that they did, what they did, by the Assistance of Spirits and Demons, contrary to the God of *Moses*; yet afterwards they might come to see and know, that it was not so, but that they acted by the same Power that *Moses* did, and were only made instrumental to punish *Egypt* the more. And (as I have already said) their confessing the Finger of God to be in all this Matter, does as good as confess, that they were now convinced of the Power of God, and of the Truth of *Moses's* Mission, and therefore that the King must let the People go. But the King would now hearken no more to them, than to *Moses*.

*A.* Why should he? methinks they deserved equal Credit.

*B.* So they did, and he should have believed them both, attesting the same Truth, by Miracles much alike; namely, that *Moses* was sent of God, and wrought Miracles to attest his Mission, and was to be hearkned to.

*A.* You have given, I confess, a new Turn to this Affair, to make the Miracles of the Magicians to attest the Truth of *Moses's* Mission, and to make the King more faulty for not believing what his own Enchanters said to him.

*B.* You see the Bottom I go upon; the Scriptures say, that the Magicians confessed to *Pharaoh*, that the Finger of God was in this Matter; and the same Scriptures say, that *Pharaoh's* Heart was hardened, and he hearkned not unto them; which is a plain Condemnation of such his Obstinacy and Deafness. So that we are not now to consider the Miracles of the Enchanters, as wrought in Opposition to *Moses*, (whatever they themselves at first intended) but in Confirmation of the Truth of his Mission, as the Event justified, namely, the Confession of the Enchanters themselves.

*A.* I perceive that this Thing lies at the bottom of your Heart, *viz.* that none but God, and those commissioned by him, can work true Miracles; and therefore you have been at all these Pains, to shew what might move God to permit these Enchanters to work three mighty Miracles: And whether you have hit upon the true Cause or no, I know not; but the Effect I cannot chuse but be pleased withal, namely, the  
Confession



Confession and Acknowledgment of God's Power by the Magicians themselves, and the Use God made of it, *viz.* the hardning *Pharaoh's* Heart the more; or rather, the Opportunity offered by it, of shewing his Heart the more hardned; which God served himself of, to gain to himself the greater Glory, and to make his Power the better known; in bringing forth his People; a Thing he always had in his View.

B. You take me right; for I can never believe the Devil, or any other, by his Assistance, can work true Miracles, in Opposition to God; nor can I believe that any false ones can be wrought by the Devil or his Agents, so as to impose upon the Senses of a sober, prudent, and attentive Person, where Truth is concerned. Upon these Grounds I deny, that the Devil wrought these three Miracles by the Magicians; and deny his Power so to impose upon the Senses of *Pharaoh* and all his Court, as to make them believe they were true Miracles, when indeed they were but mere Deceptions and Illusions. And from thence I concluded, that God permitted the Magicians to work three Miracles, of which he made this Use, to extort from them a plain Confession of his supreme Power; and this other, that *Pharaoh's* Heart was hereby the more hardned, and his Resistance carried higher; which illustrated the Power of God more, and the great Favour that he bare unto his People, in delivering them with a stretched-out Arm, and with great Judgments, as he himself is pleased to express it, *Exod. vi. 6.*

A. You would have me then, upon the whole Matter, believe, that God wrought these great Miracles by the *Egyptian* Sorcerers, to give *Moses's* Mission Credit, (as indeed their own Confession shews they did) though he made other Use also of them: So that we must not attend so much to the Mind and Purpose with which these Magicians entred (as it were) the Lists with *Moses*, to confront him, nor to the Imaginations they might have of the great Power by which they wrought some Miracles, as to the Event of them, which was their Confession, that the Finger of God was in this Matter. This, you think, attests to *Moses's* Mission, which is the very End of Miracles you first laid down, which was (you said) to give the Messengers of God Credit with those to whom they were sent in his Name. But, Sir, you know it has been all along the Opinion of all the World, that the *Egyptian* Enchanters wrought their Miracles by the Power of the Devil.

B. I know it very well; and I grant, you see, that the Enchanters might at first believe so too: But I would have the World undeceived, as well as I think the Enchanters themselves at last were. And pray, when you meet it, will you ask the World these few Questions, which you and I have had between us. 1<sup>st</sup>, Whether it does not think, that the Finger of God was as much seen in *Moses's* turning the Rod into a Serpent; the Waters into Blood; and bringing Frogs upon the Land; as in turning Dust into Lice? 2<sup>dly</sup>, Whether the Enchanters did not think that they themselves had turned their Rods into Serpents, the Waters into Blood, and brought Frogs upon the Land, as certainly as *Moses* had done? and consequently, whether they did not see the Finger of God as much in their own Works, as in those of *Moses*? 3<sup>dly</sup>, Whether the Enchanters would have attempted to have turned Dust into Lice, (as it is plain they did attempt) if they had thought the Finger of God more necessary to performing that Miracle, than the three foregoing ones? 4<sup>thly</sup>, Whether therefore, upon the whole Matter, when they acknowledged the Finger of God in the Works of *Moses*, they did not also effectually acknowledge, that the same Power had wrought by themselves, those three great Works, altho' they knew it not, nor owned it, till they were disappointed in their last Attempt? These Questions will take in the whole of what we have been talking concerning the Enchanters. And now I come again to you, to ask you concerning the Power of the Devil, by which you say the World has hitherto supposed that these Enchanters wrought their Miracles. Do you so understand it, that the Devil has an inherent Power of his own to work Miracles independently on God, and can commit that



that Power to other Agents? If you do, you must shew me what Difference there is betwixt God and the Devil, in respect to Miracles; and how I shall know which of them acts: Or if this cannot be shewn, (as I doubt it much) then we must be to seek of what Use Miracles can be; and I think you will find them to be of none at all.

*A.* No; but God may permit the Devil to communicate his Power to wicked Agents, who shall work Miracles.

*B.* Pray what need we go so much about, when the Way is so strait to the same Place? Is it not much easier, and much more reasonable to say, that God may see fit to make wicked Men his own Instruments, in working Miracles; than that he permits the Devil to make them *his*? I affirm positively, that if the Devil has any Power to work Miracles, he has it from God, and can only exercise it, when God permits him; and I affirm moreover, that if at any Time, the Devil can give Commission to Men to work Miracles, he can never do it but when God permits him, and for Purposes permitted by God. And pray then is it not as fit, and likely, that God should give the Magicians Power to work Miracles, as that he should give the same Power to the Devil, and let the Devil give it to the Magicians? For my own Part, I think God's Honour, Justice, and Goodness, are all as safe, when *Men* are his Instruments, as when he uses the *Devil*.

*A.* But is it not as bad, that God should permit wicked Men to work Miracles, for wicked Purposes of their own?

*B.* Not quite so bad, because the World is not so ready to believe wicked Men act by their own Power, as that the Devil does; nor consequently so liable to be seduced by one of their own Fellow Creatures, as by that powerful subtle Spirit. But be that as it will, I would have you henceforwards make but little reckoning of the Instruments God uses in working Miracles, whether good or bad Men, for he has sometimes used both; and assure your self, that whatever Purposes wicked Men may have, true Miracles can never serve any other Purposes than those of God: And let the Magicians come with what Purposes they will, it is no great Matter, they shall be able to do no more than God permits them, to serve his own Designs.

*A.* But at this rate, the Devil may be an impotent and harmless Spirit, and wicked Men the Instruments of all Wickedness.

*B.* The Devil can never be harmless, because his Intentions are evermore malicious, and bent on the doing Mischief to Mankind: *He goeth about seeking whom he may devour.* And for his Power or Impotence, it depends entirely on God, how far he will restrain or limit him; we do not know, how great his Natural Powers, in which God created him, were; nor how much he lost, by falling from his Innocence and Obedience; nor consequently how much is, since that, left to him. I am inclined to think, that the supremest Angel, even in his native Innocence, was not created with a Power of changing the Course of Nature, and subverting the known established Laws of the Creation, without the Purpose and Appointment of God, (and with God's Leave and Order a Fly may do it); and though the Devil's *Rage* may increase, yet sure his *Power* is not increased by his Rebellion and Apostacy. The Scriptures that attribute great Matters to him, (which yet by being ill understood, are made much greater than they are) do yet inform us that he is absolutely under God's Command; and therefore let his Power be never so great, it must be exercised as God permits, and limited, and determined to what Purposes God pleases. And will it not from hence follow, that he can no more work a true Miracle, than You or I, of his own accord? And why then will you think, that wicked Men can work Miracles by the Power of the Devil, *i. e.* suspend, change, subvert the Course of Nature? for I am now speaking to Miracles alone, according to our Definition, and not to any other Operation, strange, subtle, and amazing, which are said to be wrought by him.

*A.* You



A. You would therefore have me believe, that it is full as reasonable to say, that *Jannes* and *Jambres* (whatever they themselves intended or believed) wrought their Miracles by God's Permission, Power, and Appointment; as that God gave this Power to the Devil, and the Devil gave it to *Jannes* and *Jambres*.

B. I would; and promise to be answerable for any Consequences that may follow from this Concession, which would not follow from allowing the Magicians to derive their Power from the Devil, and the Devil his from God. And thus I have, as well as I could, endeavoured to shew you, that the End of *Moses's* Miracles was, to gain Credit to his Mission, that *Pharaoh* and his Subjects, seeing him act by a Power plainly divine, might believe he came from God, and might hearken to the Message he came upon, and comply with it. This would have been without Dispute, had *Moses* only wrought Miracles; but when the Magicians of *Egypt* also wrought Miracles, in Opposition to *Moses*, then it grew doubtful whether *Moses* or they were to be believed, or neither. And the Way to decide this Affair was not, as I conceive, to say (with some) that the Magicians were assisted by the Devil, who came and took their Rods secretly and invisibly away, and substituted true Serpents in their stead; nor (with others) that there was nothing real done by them, but that, by their Sorceries and Enchantments, they deluded the Spectators, and imposed upon their Senses all the while. These Solutions I thought, created more and greater Difficulties than they pretended to answer to, and were really nothing less than downright begging the Question in hand, for several Reasons laid down before at large. I have therefore tried to decide this Matter, by affirming, that the Magicians (whatever they themselves thought or intended) did really work true Miracles, and were permitted, nay assisted by God, to do so, for Reasons before mentioned, and not to be repeated here; and tried to shew that even these Miracles attested to *Moses's* Mission, and in the Conclusion, did not harden any *Egyptian's* Heart, so as to make him think the *Egyptian* Sorcerers wrought Miracles by a Power distinct and opposite to that by which *Moses* acted, which was the only Snare the *Egyptians* could fall into, and from which the Sorcerers own Confession manifestly delivered them.

A. I thank you for the Pains you have been at, to clear those Difficulties that stood in the Way of my Belief: I am now persuaded that *Moses's* Miracles ought to have gained him that Credit with the *Egyptians*, which God intended him, notwithstanding the Opposition which he was also pleased the Magicians should seem to make to him, by permitting them to work Miracles also; since they themselves who wrought them, came before the King and Court, and acknowledged the Finger of God, and his Power, in all the Operations foregoing; the Consequence of which was plainly this, that *Moses* was sent of God, and must be hearkned to, in whatever he delivered by virtue of his Mission: For though he delivered all he had to say, to *Pharaoh*, before he wrought his Miracles, (which is the fairest way) yet all these Miracles were to gain him Belief with the Children of *Israel*, in what he was afterwards to say and do among them. I must freely own, that the Way you take is less liable to Objections, than any I have ever yet met with; and I would now give you some Respite, were it not for that Passage in *Deut. xiii. 1, &c.* which sticks so with me, that I shall have no quiet, unless you please to tell me what I must do with it. *If there arise among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying—Let us go after other Gods; which thou hast not known, and serve them: Thou shalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul.* Should it not appear from hence, that God may sometimes permit a false Prophet to give a Sign or Wonder that may come to pass, in order to try whether his People would be tempted to Idolatry?



and if he does, how is it that they must not hearken to him? Shall a Miracle confirm the Belief of *One God*, and not confirm the Belief of *more Gods than One*, if wrought for that Purpose? If this be so, a Miracle, in my Judgment, must go for nothing; but I must believe One God, or more Gods, according as my Reason leads me; for a Miracle, I see, proves both alike.

B. You have objected right; but supposed amiss, that the *Sign* or the *Wonder* here spoken of, was a *Miracle*; for no such Thing appears. *To give a sign or wonder*, is, in this Place, to foretel some wonderful Thing to come to pass, and then it runs thus — If a Man should pretend to have a Message from God delivered to him in a Vision, or that God had appeared to him in a Dream, and revealed his Will to him, and, to gain to himself Credit, should foretel some strange and unexpected Thing, and the Event should confirm his Prediction, and the Sign or Wonder come to pass; and upon this, should persuade the People to forsake the Worship of One God; he should not however be believed; the Accomplishment of his Prediction should not gain him so much Credit, as upon his Persuasion to fall into the Worship of many Gods. For though God could prevent the Accomplishment of this Prediction, yet he may not always see Reason so to do, but may suffer this Sign or Wonder to come to pass (which would have come to pass without any such Prediction) to see whether People would be so easily seduced into the grossest of Errors, because a Wretch has foretold some strange Thing, that God had purposed should come pass, whether foretold or no. For you have no Reason at all, to believe that God permits this Sign or Wonder to come to pass, only to fulfil the Prediction, and try the People's Faith and Constancy; but, that this Sign or wonderful Event is intended by God, and that he will not put it by, though it be foretold by one who pretends to be warned of God, and will prove an Occasion of tempting People to Idolatry. I take this visionary Dreamer here mentioned, to be but a meer Gueffer, and to predict Events of his own Head, some of which may possibly come to pass. But if we should suppose him a true Prophet, and that God inspired him with the Knowledge of future Events, which he predicted, and which came to pass; yet if he should persuade the People to Idolatry, he were no longer to be trusted, because we may be sure, the Spirit of God must then depart from him, for God cannot contradict himself, nor do any thing to persuade Men to forsake him, and give his Worship to another. This is the plain Meaning of the Thing, that if a Prophet whom God had some time since honoured with an Inspiration or two, should afterwards, upon the Credit of his former Inspiration, persuade to Idolatry, the People should not remember what he *had been*, but consider what he *now was*, and put him to Death, because it is impossible he should have been inspired of God, to such a Purpose as this. And if we should (with some) suppose this Sign or Wonder to have been, the working a Miracle, yet this is the Solution of the Matter, that no Man, though he had formerly wrought Miracles, should upon the Credit of them, be believed when he talked absurdly, or be followed, when he persuaded to any thing plainly wicked: Which was the Case of *Judas*, and perhaps some others, who had sometimes wrought Miracles by Christ's Commission, and yet did after renounce him, and apostatize from the Faith. Their having been used by God as his Instruments and Messengers, did not authorize them for ever after to be accounted such, nor was to give them Credit, in every Thing they said or did.

A. I must not therefore (you say) understand this Passage in *Deut. xiii.* so, as if God at any Time, purely to try his People's Faith, and Adherence to his Worship, would inspire a Prophet with the Knowledge of some great Event, which he should foretel, and which should come to pass, and then should persuade them to fall from his true Worship; and much less that he should let him work a true Miracle, in order so to tempt the People.

B. By



B. By no means; for this would be to tempt People to fall from God, by the same Methods he used to keep them upright; and to confirm the Belief of Idols, by the same Course he took to persuade them of the Unity of the Godhead, namely, by Miracles; which would be building and pulling down with the same Hand. You see what a monstrous Absurdity there is in this, that the *One* and only true God, should let a Man work a Miracle, to persuade Men there were many Gods. They who think that God would ever so tempt his People, will be at a Loss to find how it is possible for him ever to undeceive them: A Miracle cannot do it, for it was a Miracle led them into Error, and unhinged them from the true Belief of one God. I will be bold to say, that this is a Temptation, from which there is no way to escape. And therefore they who explain this Passage after this Manner, must necessarily give up all Miracles, as good for nothing, that is, to prove nothing. For if a Miracle prove the Unity of the Godhead, it can never prove Plurality of Gods; and if it can prove Plurality of Gods, it can never prove the Unity.

A. But wherein then, may God be said to tempt that People, by this false Prophet?

B. By permitting that Sign or Wonder to come to pass, which was foretold by him (though, it may be, not foreknown by him) upon whose Credit he shall try to persuade to Idolatry: This God could prevent if he saw fit, and by not preventing, suffers this Temptation to be laid for such as will be so foolish and so absurd as to fall into it. God, I have said, does not lay this Snare for any one, but the Course of his Providence may not, perhaps, suffer him (much less will Justice constrain him) to remove it, although he see that wicked People will be seduced by Occasion of it. He had given them sufficient Proofs of the Unity of his Godhead, sufficient Cautions against Idolatry, and he will now try, if a lucky Guess, or a sagacious Prævision, or an impudent Pretence of Prophecy, coming to pass, and notably fulfilled, shall overrule all Reason, and positive Command, and be able to seduce them to Idolatry. If this be a Temptation, God will venture it, as well he may; He will permit this Sign or Wonder to come to pass, and will not go out of his appointed Course to hinder it, that he may see, whether his People will remember and obey his Warnings and his Precepts. I do not see there is any great Matter in this Passage: Nor do I see how Miracles are at all concerned in it. For I can never think that God should enable a Man to work a Miracle, and then appoint him to be put to Death for doing it, as we find it *Deut. xiii. 5.*

A. No, Sir, he is not to die for working a Miracle, but for enticing to Idolatry, by virtue of having wrought that Miracle: It is for the bad Use he makes of it.

B. You say right, but he could not have had such a powerful Pretence to seduce to Idolatry, had not God enabled him to work that Miracle. And you know this Passage is brought to shew us, that God to try his People, permits a Man to work a Miracle, in order to seduce them, if they will be so seduced. If it be, as you suggest, that God, for some other good and wise End, permits a Man to work a Miracle, and he perverts it to this wicked Purpose, and makes Use of the Authority it gives him to draw Men to the Worship of Idols, then is there no Trial or Temptation on God's Part, but an Abuse of a Miracle by a very wicked Man; which seems to be contrary to the Sense that is generally put on this Passage in *Deut. xiii.* which is, you know, that God to try his People, permits a Man to work a true Miracle. But now if this Miracle were wrought for any other Purpose than to give this Man Credit, God could not be said to try his People by it, although his People would indeed be accidentally tried by it, *i. e.* the false Prophet would take occasion from this Miracle to seduce the People to Idolatry; a thing which God intended not, but which was an accidental Use of it after it was over. If God indeed, after this Prophet had endeavoured to entice the People to Idolatry,



Idolatry, had given him the Power of working a Miracle, he had in some Sense tempted his People by that Miracle; for then his Miracle had given him Credit, in what he should afterwards deliver as his Doctrine: Whereas to work a Miracle first, and then to build any Doctrine or Worship on the Credit of it, is always liable to Suspicion; because the Miracle might have been wrought for other Uses, and you endeavour, without any good Proof, to put it to this, which is for your present Purpose. For it is my Opinion, that the Doctrine, in general at least, should always be first laid down, and then the Miracle be wrought to give the Messenger Authority and Credit to establish it in People's Minds; which would prevent all manner of Abuses of any accidental Miracles. But I foresee that, when I come to speak to the Miracles of our Lord Christ, I shall be under a Necessity of handling this Matter more at large, and therefore, if you please, we will refer it to that Place; for I have already, I fear, offended too much in Repetition of the same Matter.

*A.* Sir, I account myself obliged to you, as much for that, as any thing else, and hope I understand things much the better for it, and shall the better keep them in my Mind. You will be pleased, at some convenient Time, to let me renew this Conversation, and hear the rest.

*B.* You will be very welcome when you please: Only remember, that you take not what I say on Trust, till you have both examined and digested it, and are thoroughly satisfied. I am, you may be sure, proud of the Respect you have for me; but you must be no Loser by it, nor let it hinder you from bringing all the Objections you can muster up from all Quarters.



# An ESSAY upon MIRACLES.

## In Two DISCOURSES.

### DIALOGUE II.

**A.** I AM come, Sir, if it be seasonable, to take the Advantage of your last Offer, of speaking to the Miracles of *Christ* our Lord, in the manner you spake to those that were wrought by *Moses*; and to ask of you the same Liberty you then allowed me, of making what Exceptions I could to any thing you said, and asking what Questions I thought were pertinent.

**B.** It is seasonable enough; and the greater Liberty you take, the greater is like to be your Satisfaction, if it be in my Power to give it you. The Method I shall take, if you approve it, will be this: — *First*, to shew you, That it was expected that the *Christ*, or the *Messiah*, should work Miracles. *Secondly*, That *Jesus* did actually work Miracles. And, *Thirdly*, Speak to the *End* for which, he said himself, he wrought them. Under one or other of these Heads, you will find room for what Objections shall occur to your Mind. *First*, therefore, I will shew you, that it was expected the *Christ* should work Miracles. Upon our Saviour's feeding five thousand Men with five Barley Loaves and two small Fishes, it is said, *John* vi. 14. *Then those men, when they saw the miracle that Jesus did, said, Of a truth, this is that Prophet that should come into the world.* It was not usual for every Prophet, who was sent of God, to work Miracles; nay, very few of them wrought any; so that to expect a Prophet that should work Miracles, was to expect a great Prophet indeed; and greater much than any they had seen, excepting *Moses* and *Elijah* and *Elisha*. And it were easy to shew, if it were needful, that this Expectation of the *Jews* is a Proof, that they looked for that particular Prophet, foretold by *Moses* in *Deut.* xviii. 18. that promised a Prophet that should be like to him, as in many other Particulars, so especially in working Miracles; for he could be like him in nothing more to the Honour, and to the Purpose of a Prophet. The *Jews* therefore, because they expected a Prophet like to *Moses*, concluded from *Christ's* Miracles, that he was *that Prophet that should come into the World*. This Expectation of Miracles appears also from those many Demands the *Jews* made to *Christ*, of shewing them some Signs. *Master, we would see a sign from thee,* *Matth.* xii. 38. And *John* vi. 30. *What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?* This was occasioned by *Christ's* telling them, v. 29. *that they should believe on him, whom God had sent;* but they required some Sign in proof that God had sent him. This signifies that they expected such an Exercise of divine Power, in him who should be sent of God. And so *Christ* tells the *Jews*, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.* Thus, *John* vii. 31. *Many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* And *Matth.* xii. 23. when he had restored the Blind and Dumb possess'd, to Sight and Speech — *the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?* These are full Proofs that the *Jews* expected *Christ*, or the *Messiah*, whenever he appeared, should work Miracles. The Answer he made to the Disciples of *John Baptist*, is a Proof that this Expectation of the *Jews* was well grounded, being raised by a Prophecy. *John* was now in Prison, and there had heard of the Works that *Christ* did, and sent two of his Disciples, who said to *Christ*, *Art thou he that should*



*should come, or do we look for another?* It appears, that *John Baptist* knew *Christ* very well before he baptized him; that he saw and bare Record, *that he was the Son of God*; that he called him *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*; that he saw *the Spirit of God descending on him like a Dove, and abiding on him*; and heard the Voice from Heaven that said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. All this was done before *John* was cast into Prison; and therefore it is not to be thought he sent for Information, as though he had not known himself that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, or any ways doubted of it. But he sent this Message by such as wanted Confirmation of their Faith, and would not (it is likely) take their Master's bare Word, that he whom *John* baptized was the *Messiah*. Their Master was a Prisoner, and in danger of dying a violent Death; would the *Messiah* suffer that? Was that the Favour his Forerunner must expect? Was it likely the *Messiah* should be such a one as *Jesus*? These Doubts, or the like, might vex the Minds of *John's* Disciples; and therefore to deliver them from them, and to give them truer Notions of the Person and Office of the *Messiah*, to satisfy themselves and others they should meet withal, he sends them to *Jesus* himself with the foresaid Question——*i. e.* to enquire, whether he were the Person *that was to come, or whether they must look for another?* To which our Lord answers——*Go, and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see—the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them.* All these Particulars are found in *Isaiah* xxix. 18. xxxv. 5, 6. lxi. 1. and are so many Prophecies of the Works of the *Messiah*; for it is to be observed, that the Satisfactoriness of our Lord's Answer to these Disciples consists in this, that it had been foretold and expected, that *He who was to come* should do these Miracles. You come from *John* to learn whether I am *He who was to come*——Go back, and tell him of the Works you see me do, and hear that I have done: and if these Works betoken and delineate Him *that was to come*, let him judge of me as he sees fit. This shews that the great Mark of him that was to come, was, that he would work great Miracles.

A. I agree, Sir, to all this; but what Use am I to make of it?

B. To observe, and remember, upon Occasion, that it was foretold by Prophets, and expected by the *Jews*, that whenever *Christ*, or the *Messiah*, came into the World, he should work great and many Miracles. The like Thing never happened to any Man living besides. It was never foretold by a Prophet, of any particular Person, nor expected by any People, that such or such a certain Man, should work Miracles, when he came and lived in the World: This Honour was peculiar to our Lord *Jesus*.

A. I will reserve this Observation, for the *Jews*, when I meet them, for I think it is good there; but, as yet, I do not see what to do with it, to such as believe the *Old Testament* no more than they do the *New*. Will you be pleased to go on, to shew how he fulfilled these Prophecies, and satisfied the Expectations they had raised among the People.

B. This Matter will not need much Proof; those on whom *Jesus* wrought Miracles, did freely, and openly, and gratefully acknowledge their Benefactor, and owned they received their Sight, or Hearing, their Health, or Strength, from him that was called *Christ*; and so did many of their Relations: And some of the *Jews*, for the Sake of these great Works, did own he was the *Christ*: But because that was not safe for them to do, many that did not, or would not know he was indeed the *Christ*, yet owned the Benefits received, to have been bestowed by him, who was called *Christ*, and *Jesus of Nazareth*: They bore witness to the Person, though they might not know who that Person was. Thus far we may be sure, that the *Jews*, who were the Subjects of our Saviour's Miracles, and many of their Relations, would go, they would testify



testify that he actually wrought Miracles. This was also confessed by his greatest Enemies; those who were grieved, and angry to think he had such Power, yet could not deny but that they knew he exercised such Power. *What do we*, said the Priests and Pharisees, in Council, *for this man doth many miracles?* And even their blasphemous attributing them to the Prince of the Devils, and his Assistance, does as fully prove the Matter of Fact, namely, that they were done, as if they had believed he wrought them by a Divine Power, and had so acknowledged it. For the Question is not here, whose Power he wrought them by, but whether they were wrought or no, by him as the Instrument; and therefore the blasphemous Calumny, is as good an Evidence, that Miracles were wrought by *Jesus*, as any his own Disciples could have given. It appears therefore, from the Testimony of his Followers and Disciples, and of those who were neither, but only cured and restored by him, and of those who hated him, and persecuted him to Death, that Jesus Christ did truly work great Miracles; which was the *Second Thing* I proposed to speak to.

A. I acknowledge, Sir, that I know not how any matter of Fact can be better proved, than this, that our Saviour wrought Miracles. But would you have me believe, and (if called upon) maintain, that every great Work our Saviour wrought, was properly miraculous?

B. I see no Reason to believe otherwise; but because we have described a Miracle, as a Work of God, subverting, changing, or suspending the known Course, and settled Laws of Nature, and appealing to the Senses——and that some Works our Saviour wrought, may not appear to us to come up fully to this Description; it may be fit, perhaps, not to maintain that they were every one of them properly miraculous, though we indeed believe they were. I can believe that of Christ, which I cannot of another Man, although I see the same Effect produced; because the same Effect may proceed from different Powers and Causes. And because another Man may seem to do, without a Miracle, what Jesus Christ really did by Miracle; therefore I need not maintain to an Adversary, that every Work he wrought was properly miraculous, although I verily believe it was. The Miracles which I would most insist upon, should be his turning Water into Wine; his walking on the Seas; his feeding five thousand People with five Loaves and two small Fishes; and his raising up the Dead; and some such like.

A. I allow that these are incontestable Proofs of a divine Power; but I cannot, methinks, afford to part with any *other* Miracles of Christ, though seemingly much less.

B. Nor I neither; let us part with nothing but our Mistakes. Were you ever at Sea, and observed how suddenly the most furious Winds have been laid, and how almost in an Instant a Calm has succeeded to a great Storm?

A. Yes.

B. And what if some bold Passenger had, at that Instant, *rebuked the Winds*, and bid them cease, and they had ceased immediately? would you have concluded presently, that such an Event was miraculous? or would you have thought the Man had spoken audaciously and luckily?

A. Audaciously and luckily, since the Winds might have then ceased, though he had held his Tongue.

B. But if you had seen our Saviour Christ do the same thing, in the same manner, you would have concluded *He* had exercised a divine Power; and yet the Event is alike in both Cases: but you know how different Persons they were. When therefore you dispute with Unbelievers about Miracles, I should not advise you to insist upon any such Events as might naturally have come to pass, although you are fully persuaded that those particular ones were truly miraculous. Make use rather of such as are subject to no Exceptions, and where Chance can have no room. Do you now understand, that I would



would have you believe, that all the great Works that Christ wrought were truly miraculous, but that you need not try to prove them to be so, to such as will deny it? This is all I mean, by distinguishing such Works of Christ as both appeared and were miraculous, from such as *were* miraculous, but might not *appear* to be so.

*A.* I apprehend you; and desire you to proceed to *the Third thing* you intended to shew, namely, the *End* and Purpose for which Christ said himself he wrought Miracles.

*B.* The End for which Christ wrought Miracles was plainly this, That for their Sake he might be believed to come from God, and that what he should deliver as God's Will, was certainly so. The Bottom of all which, you know, is this, That a Miracle being a Work that none can do, unless God be with him, it is not believed that God will entrust this miraculous Power with one that should abuse it, to the deceiving or hurting any innocent Person: And therefore where we hear a Man declare he comes from God to teach his Will, and see him, in Confirmation of such his Mission, work Miracles, we believe, not only that he comes from God, but also that what he declares to be the Will of God, is truly so. The Miracles of Christ were wrought to testify he came from God, and that the World might believe what he delivered from him. Let us hear him himself appealing to the Miracles he wrought, as to so many Evidences of his Commission. *I have, saith he, greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me, John v. 36. and in x. 24, 25. when the Jews came round about our Lord, and said to him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly: Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not; the works that I do in my Father's name, bear witness of me. And John xv. 24. If I had not done amongst them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin. And in John x. 37, 38. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him. See also John xi. 15. and xiv. 11. These are the Places where Christ himself declares, that this was the End for which he wrought his Miracles, that Men might believe by them that God had sent him; and that without these Works the Jews might have had some Excuse for their Infidelity. You shall now see him shew you the Use of Miracles, in a Case that will be worth your remembring. In Mark ii. 3, &c. And they came unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was born of four; and when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was; and when they had broke it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the Scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts — Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit, that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Our Saviour does not here blame them for thus reasoning with themselves; for certainly they reasoned right, that none but God could forgive Sins; and it was no great matter to mistake, and think that Christ attributed such Power to himself, by pronouncing so absolutely — *that his sins were forgiven him*; and such a Power they never knew committed to any Man: He does not therefore blame them for so reasoning, but takes occasion from thence to shew them *who he was*, and the Power he had committed to him, and for what purpose; and therefore he goes on — *Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say — Arise, take up thy bed, and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee* [speaking then to the Sick of the Palsy] *Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way unto thy house. Consider with your selves this Matter. You heard me lately tell this sick Man,*  
that*



that his Sins were forgiven him, and thought immediately that I had spoken impious and blasphemous Words, attributing to my self a Power plainly divine, and incommunicable, *i. e.* of forgiving Sins. That God alone can forgive Sins committed against himself, is certainly true; but if you think he cannot communicate this Power, you are mistaken; for I assure you, that the Son of Man, even I who speak to you, have Power on Earth to forgive Sins, and I was exercising this good Power upon this miserable Paralytick, which was, you know, the Occasion of your inward reasoning, and concluding me to have blasphemed. And what think you? You see this poor Creature, how impotent and weak he lies before you, how altogether unable he is to stir, and help himself. Do not you believe it is as easy for God to give me the Power of forgiving Sins, as it is to give me the Power of working miraculous Cures? May I not say as easily—*Thy sins are forgiven thee*—as I can say—*Arise, take up thy bed and walk*? If I, without any Application of proper Means, or any manner of Prescription, shall cure this Man of his Distemper by the bare Word of my Mouth, by saying only, *Rise, take up thy bed and walk*, will you not believe that I have also Power to forgive Sins, since one is full as easy as the other? Now, that you may know assuredly that I, the Son of Man, have Power on Earth to forgive Sins, you shall see that I have Power to cure this Paralytick presently—I say unto thee then, thou lame and helpless Creature, *Arise, take up thy bed and walk, and go thy way unto thy house*. Whether his Sins be truly forgiven him, according to my Word, is what you cannot possibly discover; but whether I have Power to cure this Man's Disease, the Effect will shew immediately, and you will visibly discern. *And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.* Here is an Act of great Mercy shewn to a poor miserable Man; but it is plain, that Christ's Design was now to shew the Jews the Truth of that Doctrine, *That the Son of Man had power to forgive sins*. That was the thing the Jews stumbled at, and this was the Way Christ took to set them right; the Miracle was to procure Attention and Belief; the visible Effect of a divine Power was to convince them, that what he said was true, although the Effect (namely, the Forgiveness of Sins) was, and must be invisible. This Inference is, you see, of our Saviour's own making, and is a lively Demonstration, that true Miracles are designed by God, to bear Testimony to the Mission of his Messengers and Prophets, and to establish and confirm the Truth of what they deliver by virtue of such Mission. You now see, by an Instance, how our Lord himself appeals to his own Miracles; and sure you will believe he knew the true Use that was to be made of them.

A. There is no want of farther Authority, where we have that of Christ: But if you please, let me also be remembred of what the Writers of Scriptures say upon this Head.

B. St. John then says, xx. 30, 31. *Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, (i. e. St. John's Gospel) but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life in his name.* St. Luke also, in Acts ii. 22. reports St. Peter's Words to the Jews—*Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your selves also know.* You shall hear also what is said of the Apostles, because it tends to the same purpose, namely, that God intended to give their Doctrine (the same that Christ taught) Credit, by the Miracles he enabled them to work. Thus then St. Mark xvi. 20. *And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.* Thus Act xiv. 3. *Long time therefore abode they, speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.* Thus, Heb. ii. 4.



God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. See also *Acts* viii. 6, 7.

A. Methinks there can be nothing plainer in the World, than that God purposed to give his Son Jesus, and his Apostles, Credit with the People to whom they were sent, by giving them the Power of working Miracles, *i. e.* God intended the People should believe Christ and his Apostles declaring the Will of God, upon the Account of the Miracles they saw them work; which Works no Man could do, excepting God were with him. Let us hear, if you please, what was the Issue.

B. Mind not what *was* the Issue, but what in reason *should have been*, when God bestowed this Power of Miracles, on purpose to attest to the Mission of his Son. The Issue was, that many believed on him, when they saw the Miracles he did; but a great many more believed not. When *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xvii. had restored by his Prayers the Woman's dead Child to Life again, *she said, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord, in thy mouth, is truth.* And thus St. *John* ii. 11. *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him.* And vi. 14. *Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is, of a truth, that Prophet that should come into the world,* *i. e.* they believed him to be the Christ, as hath been before observed. And ix. 32. *Since the world began, was it not heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind: If this man was not of God, he could do nothing; i. e.* he could do no such mighty Miracles. And thus upon his raising up the Widow's Son of *Nain* from the Dead—*Luke* vii. 16. *There came a fear on all, and they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people.* But yet you know that much the greatest Part of the *Jews* continued unbelieving, notwithstanding all these Miracles; so that you must rather look to the intended Issue, than that which really followed.

A. Pray can you possibly account for the *Jewish* Infidelity, under the Manifestation of so much Power as Christ exercised, and notwithstanding so many Miracles wrought among them?

B. A great many Reasons might be assigned, though none sufficient; but that which seems the strongest, and which is most to the purpose in hand, seems to me to be this: That the *Pharisees* and leading Men among the *Jews*, had spread it abroad among the common People, that he dispossessed Demoniacs by *Beelzebub* the Prince of the Devils: This was the Judgment, you know, they passed upon his healing one possessed with a Devil, blind and dumb, *insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw,* *Matth.* xii. 22. And in all likelihood, they passed the like Judgment on his other miraculous Works; for it was a constant Tradition with the *Jews*, that *Jesus* was a great *Magician*; and I wish it were at this Day altogether worn out of the Minds of that poor People. Now if the *Jews* were made to believe that he wrought his Miracles by the Assistance of the Devil, it is plain his Miracles could never give him any Credit with them: if once they were persuaded that he acted by Commission of God's declared Adversary, how could his Miracles attest to his Commission from God? if *Jesus* in Combination with evil Spirits, shall restore the Dumb to Speech, and the Blind to Sight, it will be to no Purpose to tell them he comes from God, and in Witness of his Mission shall cure the Blind and Dumb. The very Means he uses to convince the People he comes from God, are turned upon him, and perverted to the utter discrediting of all he says. This ascribing to the Power of the Devil the Miracles he wrought by the Spirit of God, he calls himself, *the sinning against, and blaspheming the Holy Ghost.* It is true, the Malignity of the *Pharisees* Sin did lie, in pronouncing thus publicly, that he acted in Concert with the Devil, though they were inwardly persuaded otherwise, as People think: But to believe the Devil could indeed assist any one, in restoring  
to



to the Dumb their Speech, and Sight to the Blind, and do other so great Works, was the first Snare they fell into, and would easily throw them into the other; and the People could never have been induced to believe that Jesus wrought great Works by the Assistance of the Devil, unless they had been first taught, that the Devil could work great Works himself, and also communicate such his Power to Men. This was the fundamental Error with which their Minds were first seasoned, and which prepared them for the other blasphemous Opinion of our Lord's being assisted by that wicked Spirit. If this be a Digression, you owe it to your Question, whether I could account for the *Jewish* Infidelity under so many Miracles, and so evident a Demonstration of the Spirit.

A. I am content with it; and desire you would now take the Pains to recapitulate, as you have heretofore done, what hath been already said upon the whole Matter, touching the Miracles of Christ our Lord.

B. The Sum then of what I have been trying to prove, is this; That it was foretold by the Prophets, that *he who was to come, the Christ, or the Messiah*, should work great Miracles, and that it was expected by the *Jews* he should do so. This, I said, was peculiar to our Lord, and what never happened to any one else. Next, That Jesus of *Nazareth* did actually work great Miracles, and by them proved himself the Christ, and was received as such, by those who closely attended to his Works. And lastly, That Jesus himself told the *Jews*, that God had given him the Power of working Miracles, on purpose to convince the World that he came from God, and was the Christ, and was to be believed, in what he should deliver touching God, Himself, and the Life he would have Men lead; that Miracles were his Credentials, and that, upon their Score, he required them to look upon him as the Messenger and Prophet of God, and his Ambassador, for the Purposes he should declare and communicate to them.

A. I do not know that any thing can be plainlier proved from Scripture, than these three Points; and must I not hereupon make this Consequence, That the Doctrine of Jesus Christ is true, and ought to be believed, because it was proved, established, and confirmed by Miracles?

B. That Consequence is unavoidable, and makes itself.

A. I have always made it in my Mind; but I have so often seen it overthrown by Writers of all Sorts, both ancient, middle-aged, and modern, very good Christians all, and doubtless very learned, that I know not what to think of it. What (for Example) must I do, when I am told, that I must not judge of the Truth of a Doctrine by the Miracles that are wrought in Confirmation of it; but must judge of Miracles by the Doctrine they would establish? Is not this downright *begging the Question*? Is it not a Maxim directly contrary to what Jesus Christ established? Did not he affirm, that his Miracles were to attest to the Truth of what he should deliver? Did he not cure the Paralytick (as you shewed) on purpose to shew, that what he had said of the Son of Man's having Power to forgive Sins, was true, and ought to be believed?

B. I agree with you, that that Maxim is not solid; and that if it were so, Miracles would prove nothing that was doubtful or unknown before. We must judge, it seems, whether the Doctrine to be established, be true, and reasonable, and fit to be believed, before we can believe a Miracle could be wrought to establish it. This Miracle can give this Doctrine no Credit, but rather receives it from the Doctrine; it is, as you call it, *begging the Question*.

A. What must I do moreover with those People, who affirm that the Devil can also work great Miracles, and can assist wicked Men also in working them, *i. e.* can communicate his Power to them? For, to tell you what I think, this Power, to a Man of my Simplicity and Plainness of Understanding, seems to make void the Purpose of our Saviour, and the End for which he said he wrought Miracles, *i. e.* to gain



gain Belief to his Doctrine. For if the Devil can work Miracles, as well as Jesus Christ; and Men assisted by the Devil, as well as Christ's Disciples; what Proof can Miracles make that a Doctrine is from God?

B. Why, that will bring you back again, to consider the Doctrines to which these Miracles pretend to attest.

A. So it will; but then Miracles will signify nothing, nor determine me one way or other; but I shall consider whether this Doctrine be reasonable, and fit to come from God or no, and shall believe, according to the best of my Reason and Judgment, without regard to Miracles. I think I have heretofore learned thus much from you; and the more I consider this Matter, the more fully persuaded I am, that we are in the wrong, to think the Devil can work true Miracles, or help any one to do so. But though I am thus assured, when I consider things naturally, and according to the best of my Reason; yet there are two Passages in the New Testament, that, when they recur to my Mind, put me very hard to it; and if you please to let me object them, and whatever else my Mind shall suggest from them, and give me your Solutions, I shall be obliged; for they start the same Difficulties in the Case of Christ's Miracles, as the three Miracles wrought by the Magicians did in the Case of Moses's.

B. The first, I guess, is that Passage, *Matth. xxiv. 24.* where our Lord says — *There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.* And if this be so, you will say, unless Men can distinguish betwixt the Miracles of these false Christs and those of the true one, how shall they do to discern the true Christ and his Doctrine, from the false Doctrine of the false Christs?

A. I shall indeed say so, and I shall ask that Question. For if by *great signs and wonders* here mentioned, I must understand *great and true miracles*; then does our Lord appear to me to say — I, by working great and true Miracles, have proved my self to be the Christ, the true Messiah; the Time will shortly come, when others shall arise, and call themselves Christ, and to prove they are so, shall work great and true Miracles: But I give you warning beforehand, not to mind them, or believe them, for I only am the true Christ, and have so proved my self, by great and true Miracles. Would you have me believe that Christ meant thus, and that he so plainly begged the Question in hand? and yet I know not how to avoid this, if by *great Signs and Wonders*, we must understand *great and true Miracles*. This it is that sticks with me; and therefore pray tell me, what I must do.

B. Why, you must still maintain, that by great Signs and Wonders, we are not to understand great and true Miracles; for if Miracles will prove one Man to be Christ, the like Miracles will prove another Man to be so too, *i. e.* they will prove neither of them the Christ. Nor is there any great Matter in foretelling that false Christs and false Prophets would arise, and work Wonders; this is not enough to keep us from regarding, or believing them, if they truly work Miracles; because it is so easy a matter for any one that sets up a new Doctrine, to bid his Followers beware of any one that should oppose it, though with never so specious Doctrines; and to tell beforehand that some would certainly rise up, and contradict such Doctrines, would be but a very reasonable and likely Guess, because we see it has been, and continually is, the Fate of all Philosophy and Doctrine, to find Adversaries that would supplant and overthrow that of another, to substitute their own Opinions. Let us therefore see how such an Argument would operate, where *Reason* only, and not *Miracles*, supports the Doctrine. One Man establishes a *Sect* upon Principles that appear to him exceeding fine, and reasonable and useful, and bids his Followers be sure to adhere to them, even unto Death; and never to depart from them, although (as he easily foresees) there may arise a Set of Men, that will oppose them with equal Reason. Every body sees that this

Desire



Desire, is only to continue to himself the Honour of a Sect; for if Men follow him only because his Principles appear reasonable, why are not others Principles to be attended to, if they also then appear as reasonable, or more so? I look upon our Lord to be as well the *Wisdom* as the *Power* of God, and therefore, out of Reverence dare not think he argues on this manner. Let us put out the word *Reason*, and put in its Place the Word *Miracles*, and see how it will do then. Here is a Man that says he comes from God to teach the World his Will, which to follow is the only Way to Happiness: The World is sufficiently desirous of being happy, but it may be, dislikes the Way and Method proposed, and thereupon distrusts the Messenger, and calls upon him to prove the Truth of his Mission. The Messenger hereupon exercises a Power plainly Divine, and works such mighty Miracles, as none can do, excepting God be with him, and does thereby assure the World, that he came from God, and ought to be believed; but having Occasion to remove, he tells his Followers, that they must by all means persevere in the Faith they had received, which they had seen established upon Miracles, (such as——curing those who were born blind, walking upon the Waters, feeding thousands of People with a few Loaves, and raising the Dead to Life again) notwithstanding that the Time would come, when false Christs and false Prophets should arise, and preach up themselves and their own Doctrine, in Opposition to him and his; and to pervert them the sooner and the surer, should also work great Miracles, (cure the born-blind, walk upon the Seas, raise the Dead, &c.) Would the foretelling these great Miracles should be wrought, be sufficient, of itself, to spoil the Credit of them when they were wrought? Would it be enough to say they must be false, because they were foretold? I believe you will not think so. And what would be the Judgment of an unbiassed Man upon such a fore-warning, but this? — that if Miracles give one Man Credit, the like Miracles will also give another Man the like Credit, and that will come (as I said) to this, that if they are wrought in Confirmation of Doctrines, or the Truth of Messengers, opposite to one another, they will give Credit to neither; for it is impossible they should both of them be true. Do you then think, upon the whole Matter, that when Christ foretels of false Christs arising, and says they shall shew great Signs and Wonders, he means they shall work great and true Miracles, such as he himself had often wrought?

A. I believe no such Matter. It can never enter into my Mind, that God should permit either evil Spirits, or evil Men, to work as great and true Miracles, to overthrow the Christian Faith, as Christ and his Apostles wrought to plant and propagate it.

B. But what if he should permit them to work Miracles in Appearance, and such as would deceive the Skill, the Caution, and the best Attention, that an honest Man could give and shew, although they were not true and real Miracles?

A. That, Sir, is all one and the same Thing to me; for that which I with all my Skill, my Caution, and Attention, cannot discover to be a Delusion, and a Deception, will never be so to me, but will be true and real. Can you tell me, what this I hold in my hand is?

B. A Cane.

A. Then you know it is not an Eel. If you can tell which is a true and real Miracle, you can tell which is an appearing one, and a Delusion, if you examine them alike: If upon equal Examination they appear alike, they will continue so, till some new Discovery be made to shew the Difference betwixt them. But I beseech you take your Place again, and let me be the *Enquirer*, as I desire and want to be the *Learner*.

B. Away with your Respect; if we can find out the Truth betwixt us, no Matter who instructs or who learns. I ask you therefore, are there not Abundance of extraordinary,



dinary, strange and wonderful Things that come to pass, which we can give no Manner of Account of; some of which it may please God to permit evil Men, or Evil Spirits to bring to pass, by which they shall endeavour to seduce unwary People?

*A.* A thousand, and ten thousand, without all Question: But I value them not at all, if I cannot understand them to be properly Miracles. A *Centaur*, *Hippogryph*, and a *Flying Dragon*, are Things that were never seen; but if I should chance to see a dozen of them together, I should reckon it no Miracle; and yet no living Man, perhaps, could give an Account of their Generation. Where I can see no known and settled Laws of Nature changed, suspended, or subverted, there I can see no Miracle; let the Event be never so strange, new, and astonishing. The Sun, you know, journeys from East to West, that is the Course that God appointed him to run; this I call the settled Course of Nature. Now, in itself, it is no greater Thing, to journey from West to East, than from East to West; but we should account it a miraculous Thing to see him step but six Paces backwards, from West to East. And I think we shall never be at any Certainty, in discoursing on these Matters, till we make the known, constant, settled Course of Nature, the Rule by which we are to judge of Miracles. I assure you, I account the turning Water into Wine, or a Wand into a Serpent, a greater Miracle, than the walking of a huge Mountain for two Miles together, because I know not what the Power of several Causes in Nature may be; and greater than if I should know some Spirit threw that Mountain two Miles at a Cast, because I know not what the Force of Spirits may be. This Hint you gave me, as I remember, early, and I hope I improve it no farther than I may with Reason.

*B.* I think you are right; and by these means, you need not be troubled to account for a World of strange Relations of most marvellous Things; for they are nothing to the Matter in hand, if the known Course of Nature, and its settled Laws be not subverted or suspended.

*A.* What use would you have me make of all this?

*B.* Why, when our Saviour says that false Christs and false Prophets shall arise, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders——as you are not to understand thereby *great and true Miracles*——so, let them shew never so great Signs and Wonders, and do the most astonishing Things that can be thought upon, you are not to be seduced by them, whilst you perceive no settled, known, and certain Laws of Nature suspended, changed, or subverted, by them, *i. e.* whilst you perceive no true Miracles wrought by them. I may see a thousand Events that amaze me, and confound me, but they may not be miraculous to me, properly speaking, unless they come within the Rule before set down, and thwart the established Course of Nature that is known to us. If you had seen the Angel convey *Habakkuk* through the Air, and known he was an Angel, you would have gazed, and wondred mightily, but would not have thought the Angel wrought a Miracle, because for ought you knew, the natural Powers of Angels were such as would suffice for that, or a greater purpose. But if you should see a Man bear up another Man, and carry him through the Air, you would, I believe, conclude the Action were miraculous, because you know, (as well as you know any Thing) that Man is not endued with any such Powers. We know more of *true Miracles*, than of *strange Accidents*; and can, I imagine, give a better Account of them.

*A.* Well, but to perplex me more, we are told, that God, to try our Faith, and to see whether we will forsake a Doctrine confirmed by true undoubted Miracles, may permit the Devil or wicked Men to work true undoubted Miracles also. This, Sir, is maintained by as learned Men of all Ages, and all Sides, as ever lived——  
such as——

*B.* Hold, Sir, I intreat you, of all Love, do not choak me with your great Names  
and



and Authorities. As much of Revelation as you will, and as much of these great Men's Reason, as you can bring: But since we have hitherto spared all Names, either *with*, or *against* us, let us go on, without offending either the dead or living. Can you bring me an Instance, where God did ever permit a true undoubted Miracle to be wrought, by one that would seduce the People from Christianity, on purpose to try their Faith?

A. I know of none; but if these Seducers did at any Time work true Miracles, and would by them seduce from Christianity, the Thing is the same.

B. I grant it to be somewhat like it. And what do they tell us we must do in such a Case as this? for, I assure you, it is a hard one.

A. Why, they tell us, that as the *Jews* were to reject all Miracles, how great soever, if the Scope and Intent of those who wrought them, were to carry them from the Worship of the only true God, to Idolatry——So are the Christians to reject all Miracles how great and true soever, if they who work them pretend to contradict the Worship of God through Jesus Christ, and the Gospel he preached among Men. The Law of *Moses* was the Standard by which the *Jews* were to judge of Miracles, and the Gospel is the Standard by which the Christians are to judge of the like.

B. This is but bringing us back again to what we have discoursed of before——We are, it seems, to judge of Miracles by the Doctrine they would establish, and not of the Doctrine by the Miracles that would establish it; only this goes a little farther, and will not let us believe upon the Account of Miracles, although we allow them to be true.

A. What need was there of any Miracles at all?

B. O, take it right. Christianity was to be established by true undoubted Miracles at first; and so established by them, that nothing but the most perverse and wicked Creature living, could hold out against it. And might not a Doctrine settled thus by Miracles, be again ventured to a Miracle? Might not a Man be tried even with a Miracle, to see if he could depart from a Religion thus established?

A. Let us speak plain, Sir, and ask another Question——Is it possible for a Man to lose his Certainty of any Thing, by the same means by which he got that Certainty? If it be, then may a Man part with his Christianity, upon the Score of Miracles wrought to prove it false, as fairly as he took it up upon the Score of Miracles that were wrought to prove it true. True Miracles can beget no more Certainty of the Truth of Christianity, than true may beget Uncertainty of it, if wrought in Opposition to it. I never durst for my Heart, believe that God could permit true Miracles to be wrought by any one attempting to seduce a Soul from Christ, when I remembered that Christ's Religion was established by true Miracles.

B. But is not the Case of the Christians the same with that of the *Jews*? If the *Jews* must reject true undoubted Miracles that are wrought to draw them to Idolatry; must not the Christians reject the like Miracles that are wrought to draw them to Apostacy?

A. Yes certainly; but as I remember, you taught me to say, that the *Jews* had nothing to ground this Maxim on, but *Deut. xiii.* which you shewed me, neither did, nor could suppose that God would suffer a false Prophet to work true Miracles, to tempt the People to Idolatry, and I have ever since been of that Opinion: So that now, I do not say, I must reject Miracles that are wrought in Opposition to the Worship of One God——but I say——that none such are, or can be wrought, to tempt Men to Idolatry. And by the same Rule I also affirm, that no Miracles, true and undoubted ones, were, or can be wrought to tempt Men to Apostacy from Christ's Religion. And as *Deut. xiii.* will not support this Rule of the *Jews*, making the Law of *Moses* the Standard by which they are to judge of Miracles, so neither will this Passage in *St. Matth.*



xxiv. 24. nor that 2 *Theff.* ii. 9. bear out the Christians making the Gospel of our Lord their Standard: Because, at this rate, both Law and Gospel beg the Question in hand, and presuppose their own Truth. I do not say, but that both Law and Gospel may stand upon other Bottoms, and be supported by other good and certain Proofs; but I say, that with respect to Miracles, they beg the Question in hand, if they tell us we must reject true undoubted Miracles, because, or if, wrought in Opposition to them, since they were first established upon true undoubted Miracles. For if you should tell me to-Day, that such a Proposition is true, and tell me to-morrow it is false, I should believe it neither true nor false, upon your Authority, but judge as I found Reason. But pray will you be pleased to consider those Words following——*inasmuch that if it were possible, they should deceive the very Elect.*

B. I consider, that our Lord relates the Matters of this Chapter, to his Disciples, on purpose to make them cautious of being deceived by these false Christs and false Prophets, who shew great Signs and Wonders. I infer therefore from hence, that these great Signs and Wonders, must be of such a Nature, as that they may be discovered and distinguished by the Elect, from those true mighty Miracles that were wrought by Christ, in Favour of the Gospel, so that if they shall use their utmost Care, and Diligence, and Skill, they shall not be deceived by them. Why did our Saviour, otherwise, forewarn his Disciples of these Signs and Wonders, and bid them beware of those that wrought them? this had been to no purpose, if with their utmost Care, Diligence, and Skill, they could not have distinguished these false Christs, and their Wonders, from the true Christ, and his Miracles.

A. But might they not have been deceived, had they not been the *Elect*?

B. The *Elect* are here, converted Christians, and such as had been so for some time, and were now rooted and established in the Faith. And the meaning is, that without all Care, and Attention, and the Use and Exercise of their Faculties, the very oldest and the soundest Christians, might be seduced by these pretended Christs and Prophets, who would make such use of the Signs and Wonders that should go before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and play so many Tricks of their own, and be so confident in their Boastings, that it would stagger a modest and distrustful Man, to see and consider them. They must therefore beware, examine Things, and stand upon their Guard: For the Understanding and the Senses of good Men, are no better than those of their Neighbours; the *Elect* may be as soon cheated as other People, if they will not look after themselves. I take these Words to be a good Proof, that by *Signs* and *Wonders*, we are not to understand true undoubted *Miracles*, for there is no Way of guarding against true undoubted Miracles; they carry all before them, when once we are convinced that they are true.

A. Be pleased then to make as fair a riddance of the Difficulties that seem to arise from that Passage of St. Paul, 2 *Theff.* ii. 9.——*Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders*; and I shall be entirely satisfied.

B. This is a Description of the Coming of Antichrist, and tells us that *Satan* shall at that Time work as powerfully and subtilly, as possibly he can, to withdraw Men from Christianity, and make them believe a Lye.

A. What do *lying Wonders* signify?

B. Either Tricks of Slight, and appearing Wonders, or Miracles that are to support a Lye, and false Doctrine; the Words may import both these Senses, if the critical Men may be trusted; but I rather trust to our Translators, who have rendred it——*lying Wonders*, i. e. false and deceitful Tricks, Things that may make us wonder, till we examine and discover them. I will not deny but that Spirits may foresee many Events that lie hid in their natural Causes, which are concealed from us, but not from them; because I do not know the extent of their intellectual Powers: And from



from this Foresight, they may discover to Men a great many Secrets, who may upon this Intimation, preface notably. I will not deny them to be Creatures of great Force and Subtlety, and able to do a World of astonishing Things, and able also to assist Men to the performing many great and marvelous Works. I know but little of these Beings, and the less I know, the less I am able to deny their Power to do so and so. But since it hath pleased God, to send his Son into the World to reveal his Will, and to shew to us the Way to Happiness, and in order to our believing and being persuaded by him, to give him the Power of working Miracles; I cannot see how he should gain his Point upon our Hearts, if the Power of working Miracles were common to any Being else with him; and he should suffer Evil Spirits and Evil Men to work true Miracles, in Contradiction to such Doctrine as Christ himself built and established on true Miracles. I understand, as well as can be, the Scriptures that tell me, Christ did really work mighty Miracles; and I understand as well those Passages that tell me he wrought them to gain Belief and Credit with Mankind. But I do not understand half so well, some Passages that seem to say that wicked Spirits and wicked Men, may also work great Miracles, in Contradiction of Christ's Religion. Shall I therefore give up what I *do* understand, for what I do *not*? Shall I part with Premises from whence I conclude my Belief of Christ's Doctrine is reasonable and good, and take up an Opinion that destroys those Premises, since I am not able to reconcile them? I think that clear Places are to interpret obscure ones, rather than that obscure ones should perplex the clear. It may be, you may think, that this is rather cutting than untying Knots. I will say in short, that had it not pleased God to build and establish the saving Truths of his Son Jesus, upon Miracles, it had signified nothing, if every Man living had been permitted to work them, whenever he pleased: But since he hath used and appointed them as the Means of Conviction, in Matters of the greatest Moment, I cannot but wonder at the unaccountable Easiness of Christians, in believing they may be wrought by every wanton or malicious Spirit.

A. But what would you have People do, when the Scriptures seem to countenance such an Opinion?

B. The Scriptures shall not only *seem to countenance* such an Opinion, but they shall say it downright, before I believe it. Shall the Scriptures tell me, that Jesus proved himself the Christ, the holy one of God, by Miracles? and shall the Scriptures also tell me, that Devils and wicked Men shall work Miracles to prove that Jesus was not Christ, nor sent of God? who will believe it? They do most Honour, and most Right, to the Scriptures, who clear them best from Contradictions and Absurdities, and Consequences that would overthrow their own Authority. And for this Cause, I will understand this Passage to the *Thessalonians*, in any other Sense, than such a one as would defeat the whole Purpose of the Gospel. For, if by *lying Wonders* we must mean *true Miracles*, then shall Antichrist do as much for the Support of a Lye and Wickedness, as the true Christ did for Truth and Virtue, nay, he shall do the very same.

A. No, the Miracles of false Christs and false Prophets, shall not be so great, nor many, as those of our Lord.

B. Who told you so? or what Reason have you to think so? will they differ in Kind, or in Degree and Measure? I have before given you my Opinion, touching the Greatness and the Multitude of Miracles, and will not repeat it here: Let it suffice to say, that much must not be built on those Distinctions of *greater and less, more and fewer*, for they will not bear much Weight. One Miracle appears greater than another, because of its greater Consequences, and because it affects our outward Senses more; but it really requires no less Power to make a *Butterfly*, than an Army of *Eagles*: Nor less to restore Sight to *four Blind*, than to *four score* or a hundred. Our Sa-



*viour* wrought a *hundred* Miracles, *Moses* *fifty*, (let me suppose that Number for Examples Sake) is the Gospel therefore so much truer than the Law?

A. But will you not allow that *Simon Magus* did some Miracles?

B. I will not deny Miracles to have been wrought by Men, that were neither Jews nor Christians; but I deny that any were ever wrought to prove that *Moses* was an Impostor, or to prove that *Jesus* was not the *Christ*. I shall, if you desire it, find Time to give account, why it might please God to work Miracles by several Men out of the Pale of the Church, for several wise and good Purposes; but I maintain, at present, that he hath suffered none to be wrought, in direct Opposition to the Truth of either Law or Gospel. As for what you say of *Simon Magus*, to whom all the people of *Samaria* gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, *This man is the great power of God*——I verily believe he wrought no true Miracles; because he was himself converted and baptized, and continued with *Philip*, and wondred, beholding the miracles and signs which were done, Acts viii. 13. And I think, if he could have wrought Miracles himself, before he became a Christian, Miracles would not have converted him to Christianity, nor would he have so wondred at *Philip* who wrought them. As for the many Stories related of his great Feats, I take leave to suspend, although they would not prejudice the Cause I take in hand, though allowed as true as other historical Narrations of that kind are.

A. You would have me then, upon the whole Matter, believe, that since Christ actually wrought mighty Miracles (as was foretold he should) and since he said himself, that the End for which he wrought them was, to gain Belief and Credit with the World——that neither Men nor Devils can work true Miracles in Contradiction to the Gospel. You would not have me deny that Spirits, being of great Sagacity, Force, and Subtlety, can foretel many Things, that are certain in their natural Causes; nor say they cannot do most strange and astonishing Things, nor assist Men in the Performance of amazing Works——You would not have me deny any Thing of this Nature; but only stand to this, that they cannot bring true Miracles, when they would draw Men from the Worship of one God, or bring them to apostatize from Christianity. This, I think, is what you would have me insist on, because you say, that Miracles are the Foundation, upon which it hath pleased God to build and establish the Religion taught by his Son Jesus Christ: And that since these Things appear plain throughout the whole New Testament, beyond all Contradiction, you would not have me depart from the Belief of them, although there may be some few Passages in the same New Testament, that appear to say, that Evil Spirits, or Evil Men, should in Time to come, endeavour to subvert the Truth of the Gospel, and to that purpose, should be enabled, or permitted to work true Miracles: This Sense of those few Passages, you would by no Means have me admit, because you think it consists not with the other Scriptures, nor with Christ's purpose, nor indeed is reasonable: And tho' I may not be able to say, what is the certain and determinate Sense of them, yet I may well affirm that that is not their Sense, which would make the Miracles of Christ of no Effect. And whatever notable Stories are told of *Simon Magus*, or other Enemies of Christ, you think they can none of them prove sufficiently, that true Miracles were ever wrought by any one, that intended by them to overthrow the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This I believe is the Sum of what you have endeavoured at large to inform me of: For which I thank you heartily: But yet I must desire to trouble you a little farther. Suppose I yield, that neither evil Men, nor evil Spirits shall ever be permitted to do any true Miracles, in direct Opposition to the Gospel of Christ: Yet how are Miracles a proper Way of attesting to the Truth of any Messenger or Prophet of God——when Miracles have been certainly wrought, in all Ages, by Men that were no Prophets,



phets, nor pretended to come from God? What must I do with all the Miracles that were wrought by Gentiles before the Coming of Christ, and by Gentiles since his Coming?

B. Whatever God is pleased to do, he does for wise and good Purposes, but he does not always discover them to Men. When he works Miracles without declaring his Purpose, his Purpose is effected though we know it not; and when he works them, and declares the End for which he works them, they also attain their End, and we know it. God works some Miracles, we know not why, but *he* does; and some he works, and tells us it is to give Credit to them by whom he works them, and for those Works Sake, we do give Credit to those Messengers.

A. If I should therefore see a Man work many Miracles, without knowing or hearing from him, that God gives him that Power, in order to gain him Credit, and that he may be believed in what he says, I need not regard him, or believe him, notwithstanding his working Miracles.

B. You must and would regard a Man, that should work Miracles; and whether he said much or little, you would strongly incline to believe him; because, believing that none can work Miracles, excepting God be with him, you would be ready to believe him favoured by God, with whom he entrusted that great Power, and consequently, think that Person worthy Credit; but I agree with you, that you are under no Obligation of Necessity, to believe all that a Man shall say, who works Miracles, without declaring he is sent of God, and telling you, that God has given him that miraculous Power, in order to obtain Credit with you.

A. You think it then necessary, that a Prophet should declare he is commissioned from God, for such and such Purposes, and that this Power is the Seal of that Commission?

B. I do; and that for this plain Reason, that we hear of a World of Miracles, that have been done in all Ages, by Men that have pretended to no Commission from God, nor to be sent at all by him. And also to prevent all Abuses that might be made of accidental Miracles, which it pleases God to work now and then, we know not why, and by Agents or Instruments that knew nothing of the Matter, before the Miracle. And therefore, I pray, observe and remember continually, that *Moses* and *Jesus Christ*, delivered the Sum, and general Purpose of their Messages, before they wrought any Miracles to attest that they were sent of God, and were to be believed. Thus *Moses* told the King and Court of *Egypt*, *Exod. iv. 22, 23. Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born, and I say unto thee, let my son go, that he may serve me, and if thou refuse to let him go, behold I will slay thy son, even thy first-born.* This was his Errand, this his End: Upon delivering this Message,——God told *Moses* and *Aaron*, *vii. 9. that Pharaoh should say to them——Shew a Miracle for you, i. e. shew me some convincing Token that you come from God upon this Errand——then thou shalt say to Aaron, take thy Rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent.* This was a fairer Way by much than it would have been, to have wrought his Miracle first, and then to have made Use of its Authority to gain Belief to what he should afterwards deliver; because, perhaps this Miracle might have been accidental, and then it need not have been thought wrought to give him Credit; and the King might have replied——You only take the Advantage of this strange Event or Transmutation, and think to recommend your self to us, on its Account; how does this prove you came from God? I have only your bare Word for it: Had you first said you came from God, and to convince me of it, had told me God would work a Miracle, to witness your Commission; this Miracle had been a Seal of it; but now I may as well say, you take Occasion from this Event, to come upon your own Errand, as you say, it testifies you came from God. *Moses* therefore first delivers his Errand, and



and then, upon Demand, proves his Mission from God upon that Errand, by undeniable Evidence. And thus it was with our Lord Jesus. The first Time of his publick Manifestation, when he entred on his Office—*He began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Or as it is, *Mark i. 16. Repent ye and believe the gospel.* And *Matth. iv. 23. Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom; and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.* He first declared the Purpose of his coming, and laid down his Pretences in the general, and then convinced them by Miracles, he was the Person he said he was, and was to be believed. I do not mean, that he took this Course on every particular Occasion he found to work a Miracle, but that he took it at his first setting out, which was the fairest Way that he could take.

A. I had not observed this enough, before this Time; but the more I think on it, the more I like it, because (as you observed) it prevents and excludes all Manner of Abuses, and undue Advantages, that crafty and pretending People might make of accidental Miracles, or if you will, providential ones.

B. If it might be allowed me, I would fain distinguish all Miracles into *providential* and *evidential* ones: those should be *evidential* ones, which God enables Men to work in order to gain Belief, and which they know before-hand they shall work; these are such Miracles as *Moses* and our Saviour wrought, and other Prophets, and such as we have all along been speaking of. And those *providential* ones, which are wrought we know not certainly why, neither did the Instruments that wrought them, know any thing of them, before they were actually done, as I before said.

A. But what do you say to my Question, about Miracles wrought, as is said, by Heathens, both before the Days of Christ, and since? Would you have me believe they were wrought indeed? and if so, what must I think they were wrought for? since some of them were wrought by very wicked Men, who could intend no good?

B. You will excuse me, if in Answer to these Questions, I shall repeat somewhat of what I have said before. And *first*, it is very probable, that God hath in all Ages wrought some Miracles, without Regard to bearing Testimony to any particular Truth, or Messenger; but meerly to attest his Providence, his Care, Protection, and Government of the World. When Natural Causes still produce their natural Effects, according to the settled and established Laws of the Creation; and Men pursue their Inclinations and Desires, according to their Powers and Opportunities, and every Thing proceeds uninterrupted in its usual, regular, expected Course; the World of Standers-by grow, in a manner, sleepy, dull, and unaffected at what passes; and either reason little, or amiss, and are too often tempted to attribute all to second Causes. This is not rightly reasoning, you know; but Constancy and Regularity, to unconsidering People, oft appear like Fate and strong Necessity, without any Interposition of the Will or Understanding of the Agent. And therefore God sometimes sees fit to produce some strange, unusual, and unnatural Effects, that shall astonish the Beholders, and thereby draw them to Attention and Consideration, and as it were, awaken them from their Stupidity and Dulness, and cause them to lift up their Eyes and Thoughts to God, in Admiration, Praise, and Adoration of the Author of such mighty Works; so that this alone may be a sufficient Account of many Miracles that have happened in the World; that they attest to God's Providence, and keep up the Sense of his Being, Power, and Goodness in People's Hearts. *Secondly*, it may please God sometimes to work Miracles, purely for the Benefit of some particular Persons, without any Respect had to the Confirmation of any Truth, or Message. It is in his Nature to be merciful and good to all Creatures, and there are many Cases that may happen, that may call for a miraculous and strange Assistance at his Hands; not that can properly deserve such Favour from him, but such as he, in Pity, may see fit to relieve in a miraculous Manner.



ner. I see, as yet, no Reason to distrust all the Relations of these Sort of Miracles, where it has pleased God to rescue Innocence, and save the oppressed, and cure the afflicted and diseased, by Means and Methods properly miraculous. It is not to be thought that all these Histories of such strange Deliverances and Cures reported by the Heathens, are meet Lies and Fictions, although no doubt but too too many of them are. God who is Lord and King of all the World, hath not so tyed himself to either Jew or Christian, but that he often hath, still does, and always will dispense great Favours to the Gentiles also, and where he finds Occasion, work great Wonders for, and with them; and therefore there is no need of denying Miracles to have been wrought among the Heathens. These I call all of them *providential* Miracles, but they signify nothing to the Confirmation of any other Truth, than that there is a good, a merciful and powerful God, that governeth the World, and loveth Mankind.

A. But granting this, yet what shall we say to Miracles said to be wrought among and by the Heathens, even after the Coming of Jesus Christ, when they might rather do Mischief?

B. I do not see, why God should not be favourable to Heathens, even after Christ's Coming, and by permitting Miracles to be now and then wrought, keep up the Sense of his Being, Power, and Goodness among them: If you think these Miracles would rather hinder them from entertaining the Christian Doctrine, by affording them an Answer to the Christian Preachers and Apostles, namely——that they had also Miracles wrought among them——I answer, that all these were *providential* Miracles, and were not wrought either in Opposition to, or Confirmation of any Doctrine, or Way of divine Worship, and therefore could be of no Advantage to the Heathen Cause, nor Disadvantage to the Christian. But let me observe to you, upon this Occasion, that many more Miracles have been discoursed of, and pretended to be wrought by and among the Heathens, since our Saviour's Days, than before them; which is a Sort of Evidence to the Truth of Christ's Miracles, a Confirmation I mean, of the Truth of the Matter of Fact, that Miracles were wrought by Christ, and a Confirmation that Christians insisted much upon that Argument to prove their Doctrine true. For this it was that occasioned the cunninger Sort of Gentiles to spread abroad among the Vulgar, that other People wrought Miracles, as well as Christ, and Christians; and therefore that the Pretence of Miracles, was not sufficient to withdraw them from their ancient, universal Worship of many Gods. They could not deny that Christ, and Christians, wrought both great and many Miracles, nor could they deny the natural Force of such an Argument, unless they could oppose Miracles wrought by their own People, to the Miracles of Christ and Christians; for then they must signify nothing on either Side, or as much on theirs, as on the Christian Side. And therefore the Temptation to invent a great many strange Stories, was too great for them to withstand, and they fell into it. And therefore, as I said, there is a great deal more to do about Miracles, among the Heathen, since the Days of Christ, than before.

A. But if the Christians had allowed that Miracles were and might still be wrought by and among the Heathens; had they not wanted an Answer, if the Heathen should have said ——*you say we must believe the Christian Doctrine upon the Score of Miracles wrought by Christians; We say we may continue Heathens still, since Miracles have been, and are, and may be still wrought, by and among the Heathens; what would a Christian have had to reply to this?*

B. A Christian might have said——“ I do not say that the Doctrine of Christ is true, because it has pleased God to work Miracles by, and among Christians; for then I could not say, *the Gentile Worship is false*, since I allow that it hath pleased  
 I Sf “ fed



“ fed God to work Miracles also *by*, and *among* the Gentiles: But this I say, that  
 “ the Doctrine of Christ is true, because he said he came from God, and was to teach  
 “ his Will; and in Confirmation of the Truth of his Coming from God, and of what  
 “ he should deliver, he said he had Power to work great and many Miracles, and he  
 “ did accordingly work great and many Miracles. And I say, moreover, that the  
 “ Gentile Theology, and Way of Worship, are not built on, or supported by, the  
 “ Miracles that have been wrought by and among the Gentiles, because they who  
 “ wrought them, pretended not to be sent of God, nor came to set up any particular  
 “ Way of Worship, nor knew that they should be able to work any Miracles, nor af-  
 “ firmed, at any Time, upon the Credit of those Miracles, that Christianity was  
 “ not the true Religion.” All this I think, a Christian would, or might have said; at  
 least I venture now to lay it down, as the surest and most reasonable Way of defending  
 Christianity against all Exceptions, I mean as far as the Argument of Miracles is con-  
 cerned to defend it, which I confess, goes a great Way with me.

A. You make no great account then, it should seem, of many wonderful Things  
 passed among the Heathens, because you say they were *providential* Miracles, not *evidential*  
*ones*. But what will you say to the Blind and Lame that were both of them  
 healed by *Vespasian* the Emperor, as *Suetonius* and *Tacitus* relate the Matter, both of  
 them Men of great Credit. “ These two People came, you know, to *Vespasian*,  
 “ and told him, the God *Serapis* had shewed them, in their Sleep, that he might  
 “ restore Sight to the Blind, by spitting on him, and Feet to the Lame, if he would  
 “ but touch him with his Foot. *Vespasian* believed nothing of the Matter, and there-  
 “ fore durst not so much as try; but being encouraged by those who stood about him,  
 “ he at last attempted, and had the Success that had been foretold.” What say you to  
 this?

B. Why, I say to it, *First*, that it looks as if it had been in part transcribed from  
*Mark* viii. 23. and other Places, where our Saviour uses the same Actions in curing the  
 Blind. *Secondly*, It appears an Artifice of *Vespasian's* Friends and Followers, to raise  
 his Credit with the World: *Suetonius* says, he was so obscure, and rose to be a Prince  
 so unexpectedly, that he wanted Majesty, and something to give him Authority with  
 Mankind, and that this Accident did very luckily do it: It looks suspiciously, that he  
 should be importuned by his Followers to do what he was ashamed himself to attempt;  
 it looks as if the Matter had been laid by his Friends, and that they would warrant  
 the Success. But *Thirdly*, believing the whole Relation upon the Credit of so good  
 Authors, I say it affects not the Cause in Hand; *Vespasian* according to the Forms  
 prescribed, was instrumental in restoring a Blind and Lame Man; He was so far from  
 knowing himself endued with any such Power, that he did not believe it, when told  
 him from *Serapis*; he durst not so much as try to follow the Forms prescribed him to  
 perform these Works; he pretended to establish no Truth, or Way of Divine Wor-  
 ship, when he had actually performed them; in a word, he made no Consequences,  
 nor desired any to be made, but that which would naturally follow, that the People  
 should hold the Man in great Honour, who was so favoured of the supreme Power, or  
 (in their Language) of the Gods. Do you not plainly perceive that this was a *provi-*  
*dential* Miracle, that God was pleased to work by *Vespasian*, without any Knowledge  
 of, or Pretences to such Power beforehand, and without any Inferences drawn from  
 the Exercise of it, afterwards?

A. I acknowledge what you intimate, that the Truth of Christianity is not preju-  
 diced, nor the Miracles of Christ disgraced, by any such *providential* Miracles wrought  
 by and among the Gentiles. But sure, the Worship of *Serapis* would, by such an ac-  
 cidental Advantage, be strangely encouraged, and how will that consist with the Wis-  
 dom and Goodness of God, who has the Abominations of the Gentiles in such Ab-  
 horrence?

B. I



B. I did not undertake to account for all the Permissions of Providence: You may lay this Difficulty down, if you please, for one Reason why you should not believe this Relation; but my Business is to shew, that supposing it to be true, it makes nothing against Christ's Miracles. However, I say, that no Miracle could well be wrought in a Country given up to Idolatry, but it might serve to confirm them in their Mistakes, some Way or other, by a false Application; and it is not an uncommon Thing, to find the Gentiles attributing these Sort of Visions, and salutary Admonitions, to *Serapis*, *Isis*, and others, (according to the Country, and the Deities they worshipped) which yet might well proceed from the true God, the Father of Spirits. But this is not much to our present Purpose.

A. But pray, what shall we do with *Apollonius Tyaneus*? the Accounts of that Man's wonderful Works, they say, are strange and surprizing; and he is, you know, often compared with Christ Jesus.

B. You say true: Great Things are said of that Man; and *Hierocles*, who was himself a considerable Man, compared him to Christ, and wrote a Book to that Purpose; which *Eusebius* answered; he who reads *Philostratus's* Life of him, will find Cause to believe that he had read the New Testament, and intended *Apollonius* should be very like Christ. But *Philostratus* wants Vouchers very much, and his History is so written, that I dare trust any fair ingenuous Heathen with it, and make him judge whether the Life and Miracles of *Apollonius* be to be compared with the Life and Miracles of Christ. But this is not the Thing in Hand; let *Philostratus's* Credit be in this Case good. Let it be granted that *Apollonius* wrought Miracles, what will follow? that *Apollonius's* Religion is true? What was it? Where is it to be found? Give us an Account of the Theology he taught, and designed to plant and propagate. No such Thing appears, even in *Philostratus*; He was a strict Disciple of *Pythagoras*, and altogether favoured that Sect: But did he ever tell the World, that they must all of them follow *Pythagoras*? Was that the Way, indeed, of any of the ancient Philosophers? They made to themselves Parties, and gained Profelytes, and had certain Opinions peculiar to their Sect, which they maintained themselves, and would have others also embrace; but they still applied to Men of Learning, and resorted to the publick Schools. Do you find any of them preaching to the Common People, and telling them, that unless they change their Opinions, and follow *Pythagoras*, *Zeno*, *Epicurus*, or such like, the Gods will never favour them, nor bless them? This was not their Way, nor the Way of *Apollonius*; He went up and down, in a strange Habit, and (as he had Occasion) he corrected People's Errors, and blamed their vicious Practices; and said many good and wise Things; and talked to great Princes with a Freedom that became a true Philosopher, that valued not the World, and all it could offer; but he set up for no Religion, he amended the Ceremonies of several People, but he left them otherwise, in the Way he found them. He sacrificed himself, to *Jupiter*, to *Hercules*, to the *Sun*, and other Deities, according to the Places he came to, though not with any living Creatures, for that was against his Master's Rule, to shed the Blood of any living Creature; and if you will believe *Philostratus*, he wrought many Miracles, some considerable ones; but he valued himself nothing upon their Account, but attributed them all to God, and says no more, than that so many People, as were the Subjects of his Miracles, were benefitted by him: He wrought none of them to testify that any God had sent him; and he drew no Consequences in Favour of any Thing he had said, from any Thing he had done; he called not on his Works, to prove the Truth of his Mission, or his Doctrine; and is it not pretty strange, that People should attribute more to a Man upon the Account of his Miracles, than he himself assumes? Is it Modesty in such a Case, not to own you came from God, with Commission to declare his Will, and with a Power that will testify to that Commission, when indeed  
you



you are sent of God, and are entrusted with that Power? Is it not rather to be wanting to your Duty? I wonder much to see Men make more of *Apollonius*, than he made of himself. A Philosopher is to be modest; but a Prophet or Messenger from God is to be faithful to his Trust, to tell his Errand, and to bring his Vouchers; he that comes from God, must say so, and must prove it. This was the Way that *Moses* and our *Saviour* took: Let them shew us *Apollonius* making these Pretences, and confirming them by Miracles; let us see what Sort of Divine Worship he establishes, in Opposition to what was before in the World; or lastly, let us hear if he speaks a Word in Opposition to Christ's Religion, which was then planted, and had taken Root in many Places whither *Apollonius* came. You see I allow as much to *Apollonius*, as his Historian gives me leave; and yet Christianity shall receive no Prejudice: His Miracles will neither establish his own Religion, nor subvert the Religion of Christ, for they were wrought for neither of those Purposes: And so I will take my leave of him, when I have observed, that nothing so ill becomes the Mouth of a *Deist*, as reproaching to Christians the Miracles of *Apollonius*; for if they are true, and to be built upon, it is not *Deism*, but *Polytheism* is established, for he sacrificed, in his Way, to the Gods all round, as their Temples occurred to him. As to the last Branch of your Question, what you must say to Miracles that are said to be wrought by very wicked Men, I have already told you, you must not much mind the Instrument that God uses, for he sees good Reason sometimes to use bad ones; *Balaam* prophesies, and *Caiaphas* prophesies, without the Spirit of a Prophet; and *Judas* was an Apostle, and was sent by Christ among the rest, to preach the Gospel, cure Diseases, and work Miracles. And our Saviour will say to some at the last Day, who have wrought Miracles, and done great Things and mighty Works, *in his name, and by his power, I know you not, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*. And therefore, the Conclusion is not infallible, such a one wrought great Miracles, and was therefore a most holy, righteous Person; for God may exercise his Power, and convey his Favours to other People, by Means and Instruments, unworthy (to our thinking) such Employment.

A. But though *the People* need not all be good and holy, by whom God works Miracles, yet sure the Religion they profess must needs be true.

B. Then have we been talking all this while, to no Purpose. Why, Friend of mine, the Christian Religion itself, is not true, only because Miracles have been and are, and may be, wrought by and among Christians. For, by that Argument, all the Religions that ever were in the World must be true, unless we can disprove all the Histories and Accounts that have been given us, and say that no Relations but those in the Scriptures are true; a Task I would not have you undertake. But I see your Drift; tell therefore those confident Boasters of Miracles, that *Suetonius*, and *C. Tacitus* are much more credible Authors, than a thousand of their Legendary Writers; and that if the Popish Religion be therefore true, (as distinguished from the Reformed one) because that Miracles are wrought by Papists, so was *Vespasian's* Religion true, because he cured the Lame and Blind; tell them *Philostratus's* Life of *Apollonius* is a true History, compared with the Lives of a hundred of their Saints; and that if Popery be true, because these Saints liv'd and died in the Profession of it, who yet wrought Miracles—then may we offer Sacrifice to *Hercules*, to *Jove*, and to *Apollo*, because *Apollonius* did so, and yet wrought Miracles. I will not be slow to say, that the Miracles of the one are full as credible as those of the other, and have really done Christianity as little harm, when believed. But of this Matter you may see enough in all our *English* Writers. Say only to these People; Lay down the Doctrines beforehand, which you tell us are necessary to be believed, as Parts of the Christian Religion (and not believed by the reformed Churches) and tell us beforehand that God, to testify to the Truth of these Doctrines, hath given you Power to work true Miracles, and then work them, as

Christ



Christ and his Apostles wrought theirs, in the Presence of those who are to be convinced of the Truth of what you say——Say this to them, and hear their Answer, and till that Time, mind not any Thing they say concerning Miracles, for all the rest will be but idle talk.

I suppose our Business now is drawing to a Conclusion, and I hope, I have discharged myself of my Engagement, to your Satisfaction.

A. You have, Sir; and I have nothing left to say, if I may not trouble you, once more, to recapitulate what has been lately said.

B. I say then, that it makes a remarkable Difference betwixt such as work Miracles, that one shall know and declare beforehand, that he shall be enabled to work them. Our Lord bad *Philip* furnish out a Table for five thousand Strangers; but the Gospel says——that he did it but to prove him, *for he himself knew beforehand what he would do*, John vi. 6. So *Moses* was before instructed of God, that he should do such and such Miracles, which he foretold he would do; whereas the Magicians were sent for, to see what they could do, and knew not that they should do any Thing, till God permitted them to try, and (for wise Reasons of his own) permitted them also to do three Miracles. They knew not when to begin, nor when to make an End; for (encouraged by three Successes) they attempted to go on, *and bring lice upon the land, and could not*; a certain Token that they were ignorant of any Power they had to do Miracles; for had they known what they could do, they might have also known what they *could not* do, and consequently, never have attempted it: For, it was full as easy, to have brought Lice upon the Land, as to have turned a Wand into a Serpent, Water into Blood, and brought up Frogs upon the Land, which God had before suffered them to do. But these Magicians knew not they *should* do the one, nor knew they *should not* do the other. And this I take to be the Case of all, besides *Moses*, *Elijah*, *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, and some of their Followers, who were all God's true Messengers. This is the Case of all besides them, that they either pretended to work Miracles, and *could not*, by which they betrayed themselves for false Prophets; or else they were permitted to work Miracles, without pretending to it, or knowing that they should work any. To the *first* Head we may refer all false Prophets, and all the Stories of Miracles that are told us, without good Proof: We have not sufficient Authority to believe them; the Credit of the Relaters shakes; the Circumstances of the Story discover the Cheat, and a wise observing Man cannot believe them. Under this Head I place a great many Histories of Miracles done by Heathens, especially such as happened after Christ's Time, for then Miracles began to grow upon the World, in answer to the Christian Pretences, for which much must be allowed to them: And under this Head I rank a thousand Fooleries and vain Pretences to Miracles among the Christians, who in this Matter outlied the Heathens a great deal. Under the *second* Article, of such as have wrought Miracles without pretending to it, or knowing they had any such Power, I rank all the Histories of Miracles done among either Heathens or Christians, whose Credit is good, and related by Authors of Honesty and good Account. There is no need of denying many Miracles to have been wrought *among* and *by* the Heathens. *God is a God that worketh wonders, and sheweth his power among the people.* And as there are many Causes and Occasions of working Miracles, besides the giving Credit to his Messengers and Prophets, so we need not doubt, but God takes hold of them, and uses them to his own Glory, and the good of Mankind. Nor is there any need of denying many true and great Miracles, to have been wrought *by* and *among* Christians of all Ages. But as the Miracles wrought *among* and *by* the Heathens, were no Proof of the Truth of their Religion; no more are they of the Truth of the Christian Religion, by being wrought *by* and *among* them. That Consequence is not necessary, because God has more Ends to serve by Miracles, than the Confirmation of the Truth of a Religion.



And when we hear of Miracles, wrought by Heathens, and by Christians, without any Fore-knowledge of the Parties that wrought them, or without any Declaration of those People, to what End and Purpose they were wrought; we need not be concerned to disprove the Relation, or to discredit the Matter of Fact. Let it be so, the Miracles were wrought; what then? Is the Religion of the Country therefore of God? if so, apply it to the Heathens, who have, without all Question, had many great and true Miracles wrought *among* and *by* them. If this do not follow there, neither will it follow here. Let not Christians build any Part of their Faith upon such *providential*, accidental Miracles: But let them rest on the Foundation of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, confirmed by certain, plain, foreknown, and foretold Miracles; and on the Superstructure raised thereon by *Christ the Lord*, who knew he had the Power of Miracles, and foretold what he would do, and to what End and Purpose he would do them, namely, to gain Belief by them. God may restore Sight to the Blind, by the Hands of a Man, who knoweth not that he shall be the Instrument of conveying so great a Blessing; and People will love, esteem, and honour this Man; but it will not follow from hence, that all this Man shall say, shall be believed as Revelation. But if a Man shall say he comes from God, and is to declare his Will, and be believed; and to shew he does so, tells them he has Power from God, to restore Sight to the Blind, and actually performs his Word, and works that Miracle; the People will then be obliged to believe what he delivers them from God, not only for the Sake of his miraculous Work, but for the Sake of his foreknowing and foretelling he should work it. The Reason of this is, that the Miracle is not accidental, but foreseen. Had it been accidental, it had had no necessary Consequence; the Instrument might have been honoured; but being foreseen, the Instrument had been also a Prophet, and therefore deserved the Belief he wanted, and wrought that Miracle to obtain. This Foreknowledge of *Christ* (let me here observe, since I forgot to mention it in its Place) differed from that of his *Apostles*, *Moses*, and all other Messengers of God, very much. Christ knew he could at all Times work what Miracles he pleased; and that his Power was under no Restraint or Limitation; and though he did not all the Miracles he *could*, yet he did all he *would*, and his Will was governed by his Reason. *Moses*, and Christ's Disciples (even after all Power was committed to them by Christ just ready to ascend) could not work what Miracles they pleased; but still they always knew what they should be able to do, and therefore never attempted any Thing in vain: The Foreknowledge of what they intended to do, was common to both. For though it is said *Matth.* xvii. and *Mark* ix. that the Disciples *could not* dispossess the Lunatick, yet you know that, when they asked our Lord privately why they *could not* cast out that Devil, he upbraided them with *want of Faith*, and said it was *because of their Unbelief*. Now *Unbelief* signifies here, the not believing that they should, by the Power of Christ intrusted with them, be able to do that Work (as might be proved at large, if it were needful.) If Unbelief therefore hindered them from casting that Devil out, then it is plain they did not believe that they should cast him out; and why should you think then they attempted it, who believed they should not effect it? I think it much more likely, that finding themselves distrustful of the Event, and wanting Faith, they would not venture the Success. This I think, is the only Instance, that seems to gainsay what I have laid down, and this, were there a good Occasion, might be otherwise accounted for, if what is said be not sufficient. And to speak what I think, this ought to make the Difference between Workers of Miracles, above all other Things whatever. This Consideration shews, that though all Miracles have their Use, yet that those alone can attest to the Mission of a Prophet, which he foreknows he shall be enabled to do, and so foretells to others; leaving no Room for Suspicion, that he intends to make Use of what accidental Miracles may happen to be wrought by him, to gain Belief to what he says. But I forget myself, and doubt

I have



I have rather been *repeating* than *recapitulating* what we have lately said. But you will pardon me, if the Zeal I have for the Cause in hand, hath made me tedious; and but of a great deal said, you may afford to forget a great deal.

A. I will study to forget nothing of what I have heard from you; for methinks, I am better able to defend my Religion on this Bottom, than I was before without it. But whatever else I forget, I will not forget my Obligations to you, for your Pains and Patience with me.

CONTENTS of the Second Discourse.

Page	
125	Of the Foundation of the Jewish Nation.
126	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
127	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
128	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
129	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
130	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
131	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
132	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
133	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
134	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
135	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
136	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
137	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
138	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
139	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
140	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
141	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
142	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
143	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
144	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
145	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
146	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
147	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
148	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
149	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
150	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
151	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
152	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
153	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
154	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
155	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
156	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
157	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
158	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
159	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
160	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
161	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
162	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
163	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
164	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
165	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
166	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.
167	Of the Foundation of the Christian Church.



## CONTENTS of the First Discourse on MIRACLES.

<b>M</b> iracle, what it is,	Page 127	That this was no greater a Miracle than the fore-	
How distinguished,	128	going ones,	135
Who can work it,	ib.	Another Conjecture why God might let the En-	
Whether Spirits can,	ib.	chanters work three Miracles,	136
Why none but God,	ib.	The Case of hardning Pharaoh,	137
How Miracles prove the Being of God,	ib.	The Force of the Objection,	ib.
The chief Use of Miracles,	129	The Enchanters own Confession,	138
The History of Moses's,	ib.	How the Enchanters Miracles are to be consider-	
Of Jannes and Jambres,	130	ed,	ib.
The common Solutions unsatisfactory,	ib.	Sum of the Whole,	139
Of Miracles, few or many,	131	Questions to be considered,	ib.
Whether Moses or the Enchanters wrought greater Miracles,	ib.	No worser Consequences from allowing the En-	
The Devil can work no true ones independently on		chanters to derive their Power from God, than	
God,	132	from the Devil,	140
Nor false ones that may not be detected,	ib.	No Egyptian was deceived by them,	141
Wicked Men work them by God's Power and Com-		Deut. xiii. considered,	ib.
mission, if at all,	ib.	If the Diviner only guessed,	142
Jannes and Jambres wrought three Miracles by		If he had formerly been inspired,	ib.
the same Power that Moses did,	133	If he had formerly wrought a Miracle,	ib.
How they might come to attempt it,	ib.	God permits not a Miracle to be wrought, to per-	
Moses, Daniel, and the Three Children ac-		suade to Idolatry,	143
counted Magicians,	ib.	How God tempted the Israelites,	ib.
Conjecture why God might let the Enchanters		The false Prophet was to be stoned,	ib.
work three Miracles,	134	The Doctrine to be established is to be laid down in	
Of turning Dust into Lice,	ib.	general, before the Miracles are to be wrought,	144

## CONTENTS of the Second Discourse.

<b>I</b> t was foretold that Christ should work Mira-	Page 145	Whether Simon Magus wrought true Miracles,	158
cles, and expected,		Of Miracles wrought by Gentiles both before	
This was peculiar to the Lord Jesus,	146	and since Christ's Coming,	159
That Jesus answered this Expectation, and ful-		Whether all People working Miracles are necessa-	
filled these Predictions,	ib.	rily to be believed,	ib.
Whether all his Works were miraculous,	147	Prophets are to tell the Sum of their Message be-	
The End for which Christ wrought Miracles,	148	fore their Miracles,	ib.
The Case of the Paralytick at large,	ib.	Moses did so,	ib.
The Use of Miracles described,	149	So did Christ,	160
An Account why Miracles prevailed not,	150	Miracles providential, or evidential,	ib.
Whether we must judge of Miracles by the Do-		Why Miracles might be wrought by Gentiles	ib.
ctrine, or of Doctrines by Miracles,	151	And that after the Coming of Christ,	161
What would follow on the Devils working Mira-		More talked of since, than before Christ,	ib.
cles as well as God,	152	The Sum of what a Christian has to say in Defence	
Matth. xxiv. 24. considered at large,	ib.	of Christ's Miracles,	ib.
Signs and Wonders are not true Miracles,	ib.	Of the Cures wrought by Vespasian,	162
Absurdities that would follow upon allowing them		This no Objection to Christ's,	ib.
to be so,	ib.	The History of Apollonius Tyaneus,	163
Alike Miracles give Credit alike,	153	Allowing all that is said of him true, it makes no-	
Strange Events no Miracles,	154	thing against Christianity,	ib.
Whether People may be tempted by true Miracles,	ib.	Apollonius was an Idolater,	164
Whether Scripture-Doctrines are the Standards of		The Religion of Men that work Miracles, never	
true Miracles,	155	the truer for that,	ib.
What is meant by deceiving the Elect,	156	What to be said to the Papists,	ib.
2 Theff. ii. 9. considered,	ib.	Sum of what was said,	165
More Miracles, or greater, not to be insisted on,	157	Difference betwixt Christ and all others,	166
		What the Meaning of that Passage, the Disciples	
		could not cure,	ib.



# THE REASONABLE COMMUNICANT:

O R,

An Explanation of the Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in all its Parts, from the Communion-Service.

*In a Discourse between a Minister and one of his Parishioners.*

## The P R E F A C E.

**H**AVING been often call'd upon, both by my Office and the Rules of Charity, to assist good People, who were willing to understand and do their Duty, in their Preparation for the Sacrament; I never failed of explaining the latter Part of the Church-Catechism, which relates to the Lord's-Supper, by the Communion Service, and recommending it to their frequent Reading, and most serious Meditation; as well knowing that it contain'd the Whole of what the Church of England requires from her Communicants, both to understand and practise: And being moreover assured, that whoever will speak on this Subject with Authority and Certainty, must speak from thence; it being the publick and allowed Explanation of that Doctrine, and the very Standard by which all other Explanations are to be measured, and accordingly to be either admitted or rejected.

To save my self the Labour of very frequently repeating these Things, I thought of putting them together, in as short and plain a Method as I could, and Printing them, that I might have them to offer easily to such as should think fit to advise with me on these Occasions.

Whilst I was thus digesting these things, and putting them in order, there occur'd to my Mind (and naturally I thought) some few Particulars, which altho' they are not absolutely necessary to the understanding the Doctrine of the Sacrament, yet I believed they might prove useful to some sort of Christians; and therefore I thought it not unreasonable to intermix them in their proper Places; having found, in the Course of my Experience, that many People had made the same Objections, and asked the same Questions; and therefore that others also might be glad enough to find such Answers and Solutions as are herein given.

The Reader will, undoubtedly, find this little Book to differ from many that are written on the same Subject; and it would be strange if it should not, for they differ much from one another. But I still refer to the Standard, in all things where that speaks: And where that is Silent, I refer to the Reasonableness of what is said by me; having had my Eye continually upon the Holy Scriptures, and not being destitute of Authorities for most Particulars, if there had been either need or use of producing them.

Some, it is likely, will conclude, I have made the Duty seem too easy, and thereby have encouraged both the Careless, and the Over-busy People of the World to come to the Lord's Table with less Preparation than otherwise they would have done. To these People I only say, that I intended nothing like it, and have no Reason to think, that any



*such thing will follow: Men, I hope, will always come to the Sacrament with a true penitent Heart and lively Faith, and then I am sure they will come Worthily. And the easier this is to be done, 'tis so much the better certainly. He who represents a general Duty difficult, does his Master neither Honour nor Service; but discourages many from Attempting to perform it, who would both Attempt it, and Perform it, were it but represented easy, in any measure. And 'tis demonstrable, that no Duty suffers more, on this Account, than that of coming to the Lord's Table; abundance of People not daring to approach it, for the imaginary Difficulties they think attend it, to One who comes with light and mean Apprehensions of it. However, he who represents things fairly, can neither be said to make the Duty easy nor difficult, but to shew it as he finds it.*

*I have not adventured to subjoin any Devotions, Prayers, or Meditations, to this little Book; as well because I intended it not for the Church, but the Closet; as also because there is such Plenty of Books of that kind, as may very well spare any one else that Labour; the Generality, indeed, of Writers on this Subject, having rather made it their Business to raise the Devotion, than inform and settle the Understanding of their Communicants; in which thing I found no manner of need to follow them.*

*The Instructions at the End, or Rules of Behaviour during the Solemnity, are to recommend themselves to the Reader by their pure Reasonableness and Fitness; for there is no Authority, besides the Rubric, in such Matters, that can enjoin any thing. But I have always thought, that nothing external could be more edifying and useful, on these Occasions, than a grave, discreet, and proper Carriage; and have therefore insisted much on some such Particulars, as I thought would be most serviceable to that purpose. For, the Truth of it is, we are such weak and imperfect Creatures, that very little Matters unfix our Attention, disturb our Prayers, and strangely discompose our Minds, in the midst of our most serious Performances; and therefore every one is to be careful that he neither disorder himself, or Neighbour, by any thing absurd, unusual, or indecent.*

*Having given the Reader an Account of these things, I must desire him, in any doubtful Case, not to take my bare Word, but to consult some faithful and discreet Spiritual Guide upon the Matter, that he may either see Reason to alter his Judgment quite, or stand the more confirmed in it.*



## REASONABLE COMMUNICANT.

*Par.* **I** Have, Sir, thought upon your last Words, "That it behoved every Christian of Age and Understanding to come to the *Lord's Supper*, or to provide themselves with such an Excuse as they think will satisfy Christ the Judge, when he shall ask them at the Last Day, Why they did not comply with that Command of his, the Night before he died, to *Do this in Remembrance of him*? And the more I think upon it, the less able I am to find out any such Excuse as, I believe, will satisfy that Judge. And therefore I resolve to lose no more Time, in looking out for an Excuse of my Neglect and Disobedience, but to set about what I believe my Duty, and make Excuses needless. I am indeed of Age more than sufficient, but being of a slow Understanding, and of a very mean Capacity, tho' I have read much upon this Subject, I entreat you, in your Instructions, to consider me as one very Ignorant, and bringing nothing with me, but a Desire to learn, and do what I am bound to do.

*Min.* I am very glad it hath pleased God to bring to your Mind what I said, and to inspire you with so wholesome a Resolution as this, of setting about your Duty, is. Assure your self, you would have lived and died without Excuse, had you neglected it. For, this Command of Christ being given to none but the Apostles in Person, will either oblige none else, or necessarily take in all Christians of Age and Understanding: And that the Apostles understood it to oblige all other Christians, as well as themselves, appears from the Practice immediately following, (which is always the best Expounder of a Law) which was, that the Apostles and other Christians met together in Religious Assemblies, and partook alike of the Lord's Supper. And that this was the Custom of the Churches, where the Apostles were not Present, appears from the History of the *Corinthians* abusing this Sacrament, 1 *Corinth.* Chap. xi. as also from the Argument which St. Paul, from the Christians communicating in Bread and Wine, frames, in 1 *Cor.* x. in order to deter them from eating Things offered to Idols. Now this Communicating being made, by St. Paul, in that Argument, a Badge of their belonging to Christ, as the Eating Things offered to Idols was the Token of an Idolater, 'tis plain he supposes all Christians obliged, at Time and Place convenient, to communicate. And if it had not been, in his Time, the Custom for Christians to come to the Lord's Table, his Argument had had no force at all in the 10th Chapter. And if it had not been their Duty to come to the Sacrament, he should not in the 11th Chapter have reprov'd them for coming in so irreverent and disorderly Manner, but have forbidden their coming at all; for why should they Commemorate Christ's Death *unworthily*, and to their great Peril, since there was no Obligation on them to commemorate it at all? Since therefore he bids them *examine themselves*, and come; he knows it absolutely necessary that they should come; and this Necessity could only arise from Christ's Command given to the Apostles at his last Supper, and repeated to St. Paul himself by Christ: From all which you may see, that all Christians are certainly obliged to come to the Lord's Table; and that no one should exempt himself from obeying this Command, whom Christ hath not exempted: Let them therefore look well to it, who seldom or never partake of the Lord's Supper. God be thanked, this will be no longer your Fault: And, I dare say, it must have been a Trouble to you, to have been negligent so long.



long. As to the Instructions you require, I know it is my Duty to do you all the Service I can, in that Particular; but what I shall give you, will be none of *Mine*, but the *Church's*, of which you are a Member. I do not think I have Authority enough to say much, of my own Head, in this great Matter; nor will you be any Loser by that; for the Church will say enough, and what it says will be authentical, and of great weight, which is more than I can promise of any private Man, any further than he agrees with the Church in her publick Offices. And, for your Understanding, I would not have you distrust it overmuch; for the Matter we are upon, requires no Subtilty or fine Parts; as you may well imagine, when you consider, that this Command of coming to the Lord's Table, obliges *all* Christians, High and Low, Rich and Poor, Learned and Ignorant, and therefore must needs be plain and easy to the meanest Capacities. If therefore you shall know, 1st, *What a Sacrament is*. 2dly, *Why the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained*. 3dly, *What are the Benefits whereof we are made Partakers thereby*. And lastly, *What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper*, you will know all that you need to know, and all that the Church requires of you. And this you are to learn from the Church Catechism, and the Communion-Service, which, as it is the plainest and the easiest, so it is, doubtless, the safest Method of Instruction, and what you may most depend upon.

*Par.* I see a great deal of Reason in what you say, and a great deal of Security in following the Church's Directions, and will therefore seek for no other Help, for Information of my Judgment and Understanding; tho' I may, perhaps, have recourse to other Helps for expressing my Wants in Prayer, and raising my Devotion. Let me therefore know, 1st, *What you mean by the Word Sacrament*.

*Min.* I mean an outward visible Sign, of an inward and spiritual Grace, given unto us: Ordained by Christ himself, as a Means whereby we receive the same, and a Pledge to assure us thereof. So that there are two Parts in a Sacrament, an outward and visible Sign, something that you can see; and something signified, which you cannot see; that is to say, an inward and spiritual Grace, which God gives to us. And this outward and visible Sign is instituted and ordained by Christ himself, as a Means by which we receive this inward and spiritual Grace; it is the Instrument, or Conduit, thro' which the Grace of God is conveyed and derived to the Souls of Men. And moreover, this outward and visible Sign is as a Pledge to assure us of that inward Grace; that is to say, we are as sure to receive this inward and spiritual Grace, if qualified as Christ requires, as we receive the outward and visible Sign. And, since it is the same Christ, who instituted the outward Sign, who is to bestow this inward Grace, the duly partaking of the outward Sign must needs be as a Pledge to assure us that we shall receive that inward and spiritual Grace. Thus, for Instance, in the Sacrament of Baptism there are two Things, 1st, *The outward and visible Sign, or Form, which is Water, wherein the Person is baptized, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, instituted by Christ*. 2dly, *The inward and spiritual Grace, which is a Death unto Sin, and a new Birth unto Righteousness: for being by Nature born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath, we are, by being baptized, made the Children of Grace*. Here the outward and visible Sign, or the being baptized in Water, in the Form prescribed, is the Means, by which the Party baptized (if rightly qualified by Faith and Repentance) receives the Grace of having his Sins forgiven, and of being adopted one of God's Children. And his being thus baptized, is as a Pledge to assure him of receiving the Forgiveness of his Sins, and being made a Child of God, and Partaker of all the Grace and Favour that belongs to the Relation of a Son.

*Par.*



*Par.* But may I not here enquire, whether the *Death unto Sin, and new Birth unto Righteousness*, before mentioned, do not intimate the Conditions upon *Man's Part*, on which he enters into Covenant with God in Baptism?

*Min.* Every one indeed, who is baptized, does thereby engage and stipulate to die to Sin, and to live to God; that is, to cease from Sin, and live a Life of Righteousness. But the Grace of Baptism, is something bestow'd and promis'd by God on his Part, and therefore a *Death unto Sin*, does here signify the Pardon of past Sins to him who is duly baptized; and a new Birth unto Righteousness, is the Promise of God's Grace to assist the Baptized in living righteously for the Time to come. For every one who is duly qualified, by Faith and Repentance, to come to Baptism, and is duly baptized in the Matter and Manner prescribed by Christ, is actually forgiven all his past Sins, and in a State of Grace, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. And yet, after Baptism, he is also obliged to die to Sin, and to live to God: *to crucify the old Man, continually to mortify all his evil and corrupt Affections, and daily to proceed in all Virtue and Godliness of living.* We are by Nature born in Sin, and Children of Wrath, that is, under God's Displeasure; but being baptized we are made Children of Grace; that is, our past Sins are forgiven, and we are put under God's Favour, and we engage in that Covenant to continue so; which cannot be, but by dying to Sin, and living to Righteousness, for the Time to come, which, without God's Grace, cannot be done by any of us.

*Par.* I am very well satisfied with what is said; and, if you please, would now come to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; in which, I suppose, there must be also two Things; the outward and visible Sign, and the inward and spiritual Grace, the Thing signified. *What is the outward Part, therefore, or Sign of the Lord's Supper?*

*Min.* *Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received;* that is, to be eaten and drank by all such as come to his Table.

*Par.* *What is the inward Part, or Thing signified by this Bread and Wine?*

*Min.* *The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken, and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper.*

*Par.* I can easily understand that the Bread broken, should signify the Body of Christ, broken on the Cross; and that the Wine poured out, should signify the Blood of Christ, shed at his Crucifixion: But, in good Truth, I cannot comprehend how this Body and Blood should be *verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper*: Those Words sound as if we were to eat the Natural Body, and drink the Natural Blood of Christ; I tell you, Sir, these Words puzzle all plain People; what must I do with them, and how must I understand them?

*Min.* The Church of England, in the last Rubrick of the Communion-Service, declares, that the *Natural Body and Blood of Christ are in Heaven, and not here; it being against the Truth of Christ's Natural Body to be, at one Time, in more Places than One.* And therefore must declare, that we cannot eat and drink Christ's Natural Body and Blood in the Sacrament; so that *the Real Presence*, maintained by the Church of England, is not the Presence of Christ's Natural Body, but of his Spiritual and Mystical one; that is, a Real Presence of Christ's invisible Power and Grace, so *in and with* the Elements of Bread and Wine, as to convey Spiritual and Real Effects to the Souls of such as duly receive them: as the Church is called the *Body of Christ*, because of his Spirit quickning and enlivening the Souls of Believers. And so the Church of Christ did heretofore pray, in the Prayer of Consecration, *That the Spirit of God coming down upon the Elements of Bread and Wine, might make them the Body and Blood of Christ, so that they who received them*



*might be filled with the Grace of his Spirit.* Now the closest and the nearest Union of the Spirit of God, with the Elements of Bread and Wine, that can be imagined, can never make them the Natural Body and Blood of Christ: (For if there be but One Natural Body of Christ, nothing else can be that Body :) But the Descent of God's Spirit *upon*, and Union *with* the Bread and Wine, may make those Elements as communicative of the Grace of Christ, and of the Efficacy of his Spirit, as his Natural Body was, whilst he lived upon the Earth: And this is what the Church requested in that Form of Prayer.

*Par.* What therefore would you have me believe distinctly of this Matter?

*Min.* That after the Consecration, such a Divine Power and Efficacy doth accompany the Holy Sacrament, as makes the Bread and Wine become the Spiritual and Mystical Body of Christ. And to assure your self that the Church of *England* knows no Corporal Presence, nor any Change of the Bread and Wine into the Natural Body and Blood of Christ, you may observe, that in the First Exhortation of the Communion Service, she tells us, *That God did not only give his Son Jesus Christ to die for us, but also to be our Spiritual Food and Sustenance in that Holy Sacrament.* Now Spiritual Food and Sustenance is, doubtless, the Food and Sustenance of the Spirit; because, when it is asked in the Catechism, *What are the Benefits, whereof we are made Partakers by the Sacrament?* The Answer is, *The Strengthening and Refreshing of our Souls, by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine:* Whereas, if the Natural Body of Christ were in the Sacrament, what should hinder it from being as much the Natural Food and Sustenance of our Bodies, as any other Meat and Drink in the World; and so, in the Third Exhortation, we are told, *That, if with a true penitent Heart, and lively Faith, we receive that Holy Sacrament, then we Spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood.* Now, to eat and drink *Spiritually*, is a figurative Expression, and signifies, *the Feeding upon Christ's Body with our Heart, by Faith;* and so the Church explains it, when the Minister delivers the Bread to the Communicant, as you may see in that Place. We are therefore as *verily* and *indeed* filled with the Grace of Christ's Spirit, by duly receiving these Elements, which he calls his Body and Blood, as we should be by eating and drinking his Natural Flesh and Blood; he calls the Bread and Wine his Body and Blood, and he makes them so to all spiritual Intents and Purposes. And farther than this, there is, I think, no going consistently with the Declarations of the Church of *England*, both in the Office of Communion, and *after* it. To say the Bread and Wine after Consecration, become the true natural Body and Blood of Christ, is to destroy the very Nature of the Sacrament, and to make the *Sign*, to be the *Thing signified*; for if the Bread and Wine be transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Christ, then is the *Sign* lost, because there is no Bread nor Wine remaining: Which is not only contrary to Sense, but to the Definition of a Sacrament, which is made up of an outward and visible *Sign*, as well as of an inward and spiritual Grace. As therefore, in the Sacrament of Baptism, the Water remains still True and Natural Water after its Sanctification to the mystical washing away of Sin, so do the Elements of Bread and Wine remain still true and natural Bread and Wine, after the Consecration of them to the End and Use appointed by Christ our Saviour. But as in Baptism the Water, when sanctified to that peculiar Use, and used in the Manner prescribed by Christ, differs from other common Water, in that it is made, by Christ's Blessing and Appointment, the Instrument and Means by which he conveys Forgiveness of Sins past to the truly faithful Penitent, and regenerates him to Newness of Life, for the Time to come; so in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Elements of Bread and Wine, after Consecration, differ from other Bread and Wine,



Wine, in that they are called the Body and Blood of Christ, and are the Means and Instruments by which Christ conveys the Grace of his Spirit to the worthy Communicant. And be assured, my Friend, that you can be no Loser by this; for Bread and Wine (or any thing else which it had pleased Christ to have chosen) may, by the Blessing and Appointment of God, be as communicative of Grace, as the true Natural Flesh and Blood of Christ it self can be: For even that (if you could indeed eat it with your Teeth) would no more communicate Grace, or any Blessing to the Receiver, without such Institution and Appointment of God, than any other Food in the World that you can eat.

Par. The Sacraments, therefore, being Matters of meer Institution and Appointment, I am concerned to know no more, either what they are, or how they operate, than it hath pleased God to reveal in the Holy Scriptures. And it will be sufficient, you say, to believe that the Consecrated Elements are both called, and made, the Body and Blood of Christ, so *verily and indeed*, to all Spiritual Intents and Purposes, as to convey to the Faithful Receiver whatever Grace and Blessing Christ hath annexed to the due Performance of these Holy Rites. It is now Time to ask, *Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?*

Min. *For the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, and of the Benefits which we receive thereby.*

Par. I suppose then, that at this Time we are most especially to remember that Christ died for our Sins; and that the Bread, which signifies his Body, and the Wine his Blood, do put us in Mind that his Body and Blood were broken and shed for us upon the Cross. This is a very easy Thing; is there any Thing else in it?

Min. No, nothing else; Christ, when he instituted this Sacrament, said only, *Do this in Remembrance of Me*: So all the *Evangelists* tell us, and mention no other End of this Institution. And so St. Paul, repeating what Christ said to himself, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. tells us, — that of the Bread he said, — *Take, eat, this is my Body, which is broken for you; this do in Remembrance of Me.* And of the Cup, — *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in Remembrance of Me.* And then explains himself in the Verse following, after this manner, *For as oft as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.* After this, it will be no wonder if the Church of England neither declares nor intimates any other End or Use of the Institution of the Sacrament, than *The Commemoration of Christ's Death*; for how should any one know the Will of Christ, but by his Words? and what they are, you have seen. But now attend to what the Church says. 1st, In the first Exhortation before the Communion Office; *On such a Day* (says her Officer) *I purpose, by God's Assistance, to administer to all such as shall be religiously and devoutly disposed, the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, to be by them received, in Remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion; whereby alone we obtain Remission of our Sins, and are made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven.* Then in the Second Exhortation: *And as the Son of God did vouchsafe to yield up his Soul by Death, upon the Cross, for your Salvation; so is it your Duty to receive the Communion, in Remembrance of the Sacrifice of his Death, as he himself hath commanded.* And in the Third Exhortation, thus: *And to the End that we should always remember the exceeding great Love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable Benefits which by his precious Bloodshedding he hath obtained to us, he hath instituted and ordained Holy Mysteries, as Pledges of his Love, and for a continual Remembrance of his Death, to our great and endless Comfort.* And so in the Prayer of Consecration; — *Who did institute, and in his Holy Gospel command us to continue a perpetual Memory of that his precious Death, until his coming again.*



*again.* And three or four Lines after; — *According to thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ's Holy Institution, in Remembrance of his Death and Passion.* And when the Minister delivers the Bread to each Communicant, he says, *Take, and eat this, in Remembrance that Christ died for thee.* And of the Cup, *drink this, in Remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee.*

*Par.* Since then the Scriptures, the Church Catechism, and the Communion-Office, speak of no other End of Christ's Instituting the Sacrament, than for the Remembrance of his Death; I need not be concerned either to enquire after any other End, or to believe there is any other, whatever private People may offer in their Discourses on this Subject.

*Min.* You take me right: There is no other End declared by Christ, nor by the Church of *England*, of the Institution of the Sacrament, than to come to his Table, to take and eat Bread, and drink Wine, (made to the faithful Receiver Christ's Body and Blood) in Remembrance of Christ's Death and Sufferings; but this must not hinder you from doing all that is previously necessary to qualify you to commemorate this precious Death *worthily*.

*Par.* That I apprehend: Nor must I commemorate this Death, barely as the Death of Christ, but as he was a *Sacrifice for Sin*; that is, if I understand it right, his Life was offered up to God, upon the Cross, for the Expiation of the Sins of the World, and for the Attonement of God's Anger; just as the Lives of Beasts were, under the *Mosaical* Dispensation, offer'd for the Expiation of such and such Offences, upon which the Party offending was acquitted of whatever Legal Guilt he had contracted. When therefore I commemorate the Death of Christ, I must remember not only that he died, but that his Life was offered up to God a *Sacrifice*, and was accepted of him for the Sins of the whole World. This the Scripture assures us of, in many Places; and this the Church expresses in the Prayer of Consecration, thus: *That God, of his tender Mercy, gave his only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer Death upon the Cross for our Redemption; who made there (by his one Oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World.* This I understand, by Commemorating Christ's Death as a Sacrifice, or the Sacrifice of Christ's Death; and I hope this is sufficient; for I do not care in how small a Compass my Belief lies, provided it be *all that is truly necessary*.

*Min.* You have read the Communion-Service well, and made good Use of it; and indeed you need to go no farther: For all you have to do, is to remember and believe, that Christ died, and that his Life was offered up a Sacrifice to God, for the Forgiveness of the Sins of all the World, and was sufficient for that Purpose.

*Par.* But what are the Benefits whereof we are made Partakers by receiving this Sacrament? for though I come to it, because commanded, and do there (as I am also bid) commemorate the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, yet what Advantage is it so to commemorate Christ's Death?

*Min.* The Benefits of Christ's Death are numberless and inestimable; it is the Fountain and Foundation of all God's Mercies, which he either bestows on Men in this Life, or promises in the other. And, doubtless, the Benefits of duly commemorating this Death are also very great; and therefore the Church's Answer to this Question is, — *The Strengthening and Refreshing of the Soul by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine.* The Death of Christ, is as much the Life of the Soul, as Bread and Wine are the Life and Sustenance of the Body. Bread, you know, is the Staff of Life, and Wine is that which cheareth the Heart of Man, and supporteth his Spirit; and they are put here to signify the whole Sustenance of Man's Life. As therefore a Man's Body cannot be supported and maintained



tained with Strength and Vigour, without the Sustenance of Bread and Wine; so does the Life of the Soul consist in Faith on the Son of God, and would without it languish away and die. These you see, are figurative Expressions, and must be so, by reason the Soul cannot properly be said either to *eat* or *drink*. But it is easy enough to understand, that as Man's Body lives by Meat and Drink, so does his Soul by Faith in God, and Hope in his Promises; and that, as when the Body is faint and languishing, it is supported and revived by Bread and Wine; so is the Soul of a poor penitent Offender, (when fainting under the Weight of its Guilt) strengthened, refreshed, and quickened again to Life, by remembering what Christ has suffered for his Sake; how he died to redeem his Soul, to make Satisfaction to God for all his Sins, and reconcile him to him. And therefore to commemorate the Benefits of Christ's Death, must needs be the Refreshment, Comfort and Support of a Man's Spirit, and the very Life of his Soul. But you will have a fuller View of all these Spiritual Advantages, by Reading the second Prayer after the Receiving of the Sacrament, wherein the Communicants give thanks to God (by the Mouth of the Minister) *for that he vouchsafes to feed those, who have duly received those holy Mysteries, with the Spiritual Food of the most precious Body and Blood of Christ, and does assure them thereby of his Favour and Goodness towards them, and that they are very Members incorporate in the Mystical Body of his Son; which is the blessed Company of all Faithful People; and are also Heirs, through Hope, of his everlasting Kingdom, by the Merits of the most precious Death and Passion of his dear Son.* In which Words, the Church numbers up the Benefits that accrue to the worthy Receiver. 1<sup>st</sup>, They are fed with the Spiritual Food of Christ's Body and Blood. 2<sup>dly</sup>, They are assured thereby of God's Favour and Goodness towards them. 3<sup>dly</sup>, They are Members of Christ's Mystical Body, *i. e.* the Church, of which Christ is the Head: And, 4<sup>thly</sup>, Heirs of Salvation. Now, though we are made in Baptism, Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven; yet was it for the Merit of Christ's Death and Sufferings that God was pleased to enter into Covenant with us in Baptism, and thereby gave us a Right to all those Benefits and Privileges. And therefore we have seen that the Sacrament was ordained for the Commemoration of the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, and for Commemoration of the Benefits that we receive by that Death; and the Commemoration of these Benefits is, in truth, the Strengthening and Refreshing of the Soul, as Peoples Bodies are refreshed by Bread and Wine. To think, remember, and believe, that by duly Receiving these blessed Elements, we are fed with the Spiritual Food of Christ's Body and Blood, that we are thereby assur'd of God's Favour, Members of Christ's Church, and Heirs, through Hope, of everlasting Salvation; to remember, I say, these Honours and Advantages, must Strengthen and Refresh the Souls of humble Sinners, as much as Bread and Wine can do their Bodies. You must bear with the Repetition of these Matters, in order to your better understanding them, and their being the better impressed on your Mind.

*Par.* I thank you, Sir, and perceive I am no Loser by the frequent inculcating of the same Thing. Let me now, if you please, give you a short Summary of what you have discoursed of, that you may see, whether I have understood and taken you right. "I find my self indispensably obliged, by Christ's Command, to come  
" to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and I do not see what can excuse me  
" from doing so, being of Age and Understanding, and having convenient Oppor-  
" tunity. When I come there, I am to do as Christ bad his Disciples do, take the  
" Elements of Bread and Wine, and eat the one, and drink the other, in Com-  
" memoration of Christ's Death. The Bread, I understand, is, by the Appoint-  
" ment of Christ, to signify his Body, and the Wine his Blood. And when I eat  
" the Bread, I am to remember that Christ's Body was cruelly used, nailed to the



“ Cross, wounded, and pierced. And when I drink the Wine, I am to remember  
 “ that his Blood was shed and poured out upon that Cross. This Death of Christ,  
 “ I am to look upon as an Expiatory Sacrifice, which he offered up to God upon  
 “ the Cross, for the Sins of all Mankind, and for mine in particular amongst the  
 “ Rest, if I take Care to qualify my self as he requires. This Bread and Wine,  
 “ thus blessed and consecrated to this particular Use, I am not, you say, to con-  
 “ sider as common Bread and Wine; nor yet to think they are at all changed in  
 “ their Nature; but to call them the Body and Blood of Christ, and to believe they  
 “ will (if worthily received) convey to me the Benefits of Christ’s Death and  
 “ Passion.” This *Virtual* Presence of Christ’s Body and Blood I can understand, and  
 it is *Real* as to all spiritual Intents and Purposes; for God, I am sure, can as well  
 convey his Grace to my Soul, and make me a Partaker of the Benefits of Christ’s  
 Death, by these Elements, which, being blessed, signify and represent his Body and  
 Blood, as by his Natural Flesh and Natural Blood, if I could eat the one, and drink  
 the other. Farther than this, I am glad to hear you think the Church of *England*  
 does not go. But since all these great Advantages and Spiritual Benefits accrue only  
 to him who comes to this Table of the Lord, *duly and worthily prepared*, it is most  
 necessary that I ask, in the last Place,—*What is required of them, who come to the*  
*Lord’s Supper?*

*Min.* To examine themselves, whether they truly repent them of their former Sins;  
*steadfastly purposing to lead a new Life, have a lively Faith in God’s Mercy through*  
*Christ, with a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all Men.*

*Par.* A great Work, I assure you, if every Thing be considered particularly.

*Min.* Be not frightened; it is no more than what all Christians are always obliged  
 to, as well when they come not to the Sacrament, as when they come to it.

*Par.* What is it truly to repent of all my former Sins?

*Min.* I will tell you, in the Words of the Church, in her *First Exhortation*.  
 It is, *To examine your Life and Conversation by the Rule of God’s Commandments:*  
*And whereinssoever you shall perceive your self to have offended, either by Will, Word,*  
*or Deed, there to bewail your own Sinfulness, and confess your self to Almighty God,*  
*with full purpose of Amendment.* Nothing can possibly be plainer. You must be-  
 think your self, how you have spent your Life past, and what Commands of God  
 you have transgressed, and what you have neglected; what you have done which  
 was forbidden by God, and what you have not done which was commanded. This  
 your Conscience (if you be in earnest) will, upon some short Reflection, bring to  
 Memory: And for this you must implore God’s Mercy, and beseech him, for  
 Christ’s Sake, to forgive you.

*Par.* Is it enough then to confess my Sins to God, and to be unfeignedly con-  
 cern’d and sorrowful for having offended him? Is this to have repented?

*Min.* You must remember, that our Sins are against God, and against our Neigh-  
 bour: And that Repentance implies not only *Sorrow* for Sin, but an Endeavour to  
 undo, as far as we can, whatever we have done amiss. Now, in all Sins that are so  
 done, as nothing of them can be undone, nor any amends made for them, there  
 to confess them, and be sorry for them, is sufficiently to repent of them, because it is  
 all that a Man can do; where a Man can do more, more will be expected from  
 him: For Repentance is the undoing, as much as we can, what we have done  
 amiss. And if you remember this, you will easily see what Repentance will suffice  
 for almost all Sins. It is therefore for such Sins (whether against God or Man, or  
 both) as cannot be undone, nor other amends made for them, that the Church calls  
 upon you, *to bewail them, and confess your self to God with full Purpose of Amend-*  
*ment.* But for other Offences, the Church directs you otherwise. If (saith she)  
*you shall perceive your Offences to be such, as are not only against God, but also against*  
*your*



*your Neighbours, then you shall reconcile your self unto them, being ready to make Restitution and Satisfaction, according to the utmost of your Power, for all Injuries and Wrongs done by you to any other; and being likewise ready to forgive others that have offended you, as you would have Forgiveness of your Offences at God's Hands.*

*Par.* But what if I am able to make no Restitution, or Satisfaction at all, for the Injury I have done my Neighbour? Must I not come to the Sacrament, provided I acknowledge and confess my Sin to God, and promise, in my Mind, to make amends, whenever I am able?

*Min.* Yes certainly, for this is all the Repentance you can shew, under your Inability of making Satisfaction; and such a Resolution of being Just and Honest, is sufficient till you are able to put it in Execution.

*Par.* But, supposing I have wrong'd a Man, (as for Instance, my Master, when I was his Servant, and trusted by him) by defrauding him of Goods or Money, or any Thing valuable, and am now convinced of my Fault in doing so, and would make him Restitution if I could, but find I am not able; am I obliged to confess my Fault to him, before I come to the Sacrament? Does Repentance certainly include Confession to the *Party injured*? The Case, I doubt, is common; but I know 'it was my own Case certainly: And what would you advise in it?

*Min.* If your Confession would do your Master, or any one else any Service, I would not only *advise* it, but *enjoin* it to you. As for Example, if your Confession would shew your Master some particular Cases, where his Servants, or others whom he Trusts, may over-reach or defraud him, of which he is not aware, and understands not, there, you see, your Confession would be of use to him, and preserve him from others Injuries; and there, I would advise you to give him Information, that he may be more secure for the Future. But this may be done under-hand, and in generals, without discovering your self, and your particular Frauds; because, as the Case may happen, such Discovery may do him no Service, and your self much Mischief; and where no Good can come to the Party injur'd by a Confession, there I can see no need of it.

*Par.* May I also make Restitution when I am able, without discovering my Name to the Party injur'd?

*Min.* You may, where the Injury done is fully satisfied by Restitution. As for Example: You have wrong'd such an one of fifty Crowns, or to the Value of that Sum; the Injury here, is the Loss of so much Money; when therefore this Loss is made up, the Injury is removed; what Good would it do, to let the Party know *who* it was that wronged him? It might do you some Mischief, but I think it could do him no Service. If he suspected and impleaded you at Law, and you were cast, you would be obliged to pay the Costs, and also to confess your Fault, because you would here clear your Adversary of false Accusation, and justify the Sentence of your Judges, which is a great Good to the Common-Wealth.

*Par.* I see the Reason of what you say. But what was the other Case, where I should be obliged to confess my secret Fraud, though I could not, at that Time, make Restitution?

*Min.* If your Master did either publicly accuse, or very strongly suspect another Person, of doing him that Wrong, which you indeed did him; here you would be obliged to clear that Innocent Person, and free him from the Trouble and Injury of being falsely accused, or ill thought of; and also your Master would be freed from doing Injury, by falsely accusing, or unjustly suspecting an innocent Person. Here, you perceive, you would do Justice, and a great deal of Good, by your Discovery and Confession. But in Cases where no Good would come, but Mischief, by Confession of your Fault to the injured Party, there, I imagine, you may rest satisfied with Confession to God, and a Purpose of Restitution when you are able.

*Par.*



*Par.* I thought Confession had been always necessary; but I perceive, that where it would answer no good End, there it may be better spared, and without Sin. And therefore let me put the Case, that I had polluted my Neighbour's Bed, and thereby injured three Parties most notoriously; *Him*, his *Wife*, and *My own*: I must not, by this Rule, confess my Offence to them.

*Min.* Consider how much Mischief such a Confession might do to your Neighbour, and to your own Wife, and how little Good; and then you will see the Reason of the Rule. You would break the Peace and Happiness of two Families during their whole Lives, and, it may be, occasion a World of Mischief, from the Rage of Jealousy, and the Sense of such great Injuries. But mistake me not quite; I discharge you from confessing this Sin either to the abused Husband, or to your own abused Wife; but I should lay it strictly on you to confess your Sin to your wicked Partner, and let her know, (but with all Secrecy) how much you are concerned at your Transgression, and how sincerely you repent of it; and how you wish that she would do so too. This Confession I would never excuse you from, because it would be the likeliest Method to reclaim your sinful Partner, and undo the Mischief you have done; and truly, I cannot see how you could repent in earnest of this Sin, without endeavouring to amend those whom you had been so instrumental in corrupting and undoing. And yet I would excuse you even from this, if there were manifest Danger of the abused Husband's discovering the Falshood of his Wife, by your Confession. You see, I make the good Effects of Confession, to be the Reason of making it; and therefore where a greater Mischief would probably ensue from it, I cannot think it Necessary. But it must then be made to God, with greater Sorrow and Concern, if it be possible.

*Par.* But what if I should have sinned with common Prostitutes, and such as make a Trade of it, and who cannot be presumed ignorant of their Sin?

*Min.* The Case is somewhat otherwise there; and you must judge what Likelihood there is of your Advice's succeeding with such People; for where you think they know their Way is Sinful, and Counsel would have no Effect; there, I believe, you are under no Obligation to give them Warning.

*Par.* The Sum therefore of what you say is, I think, this—That Confession and Restitution are the two external Tokens of Repentance—and that the Rule and Measure of Confession (to the Parties injur'd) is, the Benefit and Good that would come by it. And the Rule and Measure of Restitution is, a Man's Ability of making it. So that where Mischief, and no Good, would come by Confession, there I may Repent without Confession, except to God. And where I am able to make no Restitution, there I may Repent sincerely without it; and so may come to the Holy Sacrament, though I have done much Wrong and Injury. I wish I could supply these great Defects with a proportionable Share of *Sorrow* for my Sins: Can you tell what is proper to excite and raise it in me? For methinks I am too cold and unconcerned in this Matter.

*Min.* Endeavour to possess your Mind with a true Sense of the Heinousness of Sin, by considering, That God who gave you Life and Being, and made you to be happy, is so displeased with Sin, that he resolves, for its Sake, not only to deprive you of the Happiness he intended for you, but to make you miserable beyond Expression, and that for ever in the World to come. Think with your self, *who* Christ the Lord was, and what he has done and suffered, to redeem you from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin; and you will have another kind of Notion and Opinion of the Heinousness of Sin, than you can have from either its natural Turpitude, or from the Mischief it does in the World, though both those Things are considerable. The whole Oeconomy of Christianity were a very strange Thing, unless Sin be the most  
heinous



heinous and abominable Thing that can be before God. And therefore when you would work in your self, a true Sense of the Heinousness of Sin, you must consider what is threatned to it; and what was done by Christ, (the Eternal Son of God) to save you from it.

*Par.* But this kind of Sorrow looks (methinks) rather like Sorrow for the *Effects* of God's Displeasure, which are *Loss* and *Punishment*; than Sorrow for the *Occasion* of that Displeasure, which is *Sin*. I own, *Sir*, I am very sorry for my Sins, when I consider what a Loser I am like to be by them, and how much I must suffer for them; but this is being sorry wholly for my own Sake.

*Min.* Be content, *Sir*, to do what you can, and as well as you can. It would take up a World of Time, to persuade you to be exceeding Sorrowful for your Sins, if your Sins would do you no Mischief, and procure you no Punishment.

*Par.* I think so too. But yet I have I know not what kind of Concern about me, that my Sorrow for Sin should proceed from no nobler and better Principle than the Fear of Punishment. And you must know, much better than I, how all sorts of Writers and Discourses decry the Repentance that proceeds from *Fear of Punishment*.

*Min.* Never think of setting up for a Man of Honour in Religion; trust to the Principles that God hath implanted in you, which are, *Hope*, and Desire of Good, and *Fear*, and Hate of Evil: And trust to the Rules that God hath set you in his holy Word, to guide and direct your self by. If God exhort you to such and such Things, and promise you to reward your Performance of them with such and such Blessings, think with your self, whether you may not set about those Actions, in view of those Rewards, and for the Sake of those Blessings. If God prohibit you such and such Things, and tell you, if you venture on them, he will punish you in this and that Manner, think with your Self, whether you may not abstain from those Things for fear of being so punished. These are plain Things, let them never slip out of your Mind. Nor let the Reverence of any Man (though it were St. *Austin* himself) cause you to forget, that the Scriptures are made up of Promises and Threats, both which would signify nothing, if Men might not be moved by them, both to perform their Duty, and obtain their Recompence, and to avoid both Guilt and Punishment. Now the same Promises being made to *Repentance*, which are made to *Innocence* and Obedience, and the same Threatnings denounced to *Impenitence*, which are denounced to *Sin* and *Wickedness*; it is evident, that Men may repent and turn to God upon the same Principles, by which they might have continued Innocent and Obedient, *viz.* the Promises of Blessings, and the Threats of Mischief, Pain and Misery; the one to excite their Hope, the other to awaken their Fear, and both to secure their Obedience. But if you can repent upon any better or (as you call them) nobler Principles, you may. I am only trying to shew you, that the Repentance proceeding from *Fear of Punishment* is safe, and will be acceptable with God, as being both natural and reasonable. I would have you only distrust *that Fear*, that drives Men from their Duty, not that which urges them to it.

*Par.* I can, and do consider Sin, as a Thing offensive before God, unworthy of my self, against my Reason and better Knowledge, and against express Command; and upon these Accounts, I am somewhat troubled for having committed it; but this Sorrow, I confess, does not arise so high, as the Consideration of the Danger it exposes me to carries it; and therefore I am very glad to hear it is so justifiable and safe; and indeed my Reason cannot disprove any Thing you have said in its Excuse; I will try henceforwards not to be discouraged by any one's Authority, affirming the contrary, if it be against Reason and without Scripture; and in the mean Time, by the Grace of God, will try to fortify my Resolutions of Obedience



and Repentance, with the best Considerations I can, besides the Fear of Punishment. This Sorrow therefore for having offended God, and Restitution where I am able to make it, and the Purpose of making amends when I am able, will, I hope, include the whole of Repentance of my Sins past. The next Thing required of me is, you say, *stedfastly to purpose to lead a new Life*: And that refers to the Time to come. The meaning of this is, I imagine, that I resolve in great earnest to amend in all Particulars, wherein I have found my self, upon Examination, Faulty. If I have Stollen, I will Steal no more: If I have been guilty of Lying, Slandering, Swearing, Blaspheming, Drunkenness, Intemperance, and Impurity, I will henceforward Study to speak the Truth, and to avoid those Sins, and all Occasions of falling into them, and be continually upon my Guard against all the Natural and usual Temptations to them. But what, if when I have made these Resolutions of falling no more into these Sins, I should be so wicked as to break them; What must I do then? I have Reason enough (God knows) to apprehend with Fear, that this (which is so common) may be my Case; and with what Heart can one, who has often resolved against his Sins, and often broke his Resolutions deliberately, resolve again to keep them?

*Min.* Assure your self, that you have nothing else to do, in such a Case, but to resolve again to keep those Resolutions you have often broken. The Breach of good Resolutions is certainly as pardonable as other Sins, and, if repented of, will certainly be pardoned; and therefore let not your frequent failing discourage you from attempting again and again, till you have gained your Point. Remember there is nothing else to do; it is absolutely necessary you should resolve, until your Resolutions take Effect.

*Par.* The *Third* Thing requisite to the coming worthily to the Sacrament, is, *to have a lively Faith in God's Mercies through Christ*. What may the meaning of that be?

*Min.* To believe in great earnest that God was so exceedingly gracious and merciful to Mankind, that he gave his only Son to die for the Redemption of them, and to purchase the Pardon of all the Sins, which they shall truly repent of, and leave.

*Par.* Is it then absolutely necessary that I, and every one who comes to the Sacrament, should certainly believe our Sins are forgiven upon Repentance?

*Min.* Not only at the Sacrament, but at any other Time, whoever truly repents of his Sins, shall certainly, for Christ's Sake, be forgiven. The Promise of Forgiveness of Sins is made by God, in Jesus Christ, to Repentance; if therefore you believe you have truly repented, you cannot possibly distrust the Performance of Covenants on God's Part. But it is possible you may distrust the Performance of your own Part, and the Truth and Sincerity of your Repentance; and then you cannot but distrust the Forgiveness of your Sins on God's Part. And that is not want of Faith, nor any Fault, for God only promises Forgiveness to Repentance. As far therefore as you distrust the Sincerity of your Repentance, so far will you distrust your Forgiveness; but you see that such a Distrust charges God with neither want of Truth, nor want of Mercy or Goodness; and therefore is no way Faulty with respect to Him.

*Par.* But may I come to the Sacrament with a Distrust of the Truth of my Repentance, since in the *first* Exhortation I find these Words—*It is requisite, that no Man should come to the holy Communion, but with a full Trust in God's Mercy, and with a quiet Conscience*. Now, though I have no Manner of Distrust of God's Mercy in general, yet if I cannot apply it to my self in particular, how should I have a *quiet Conscience*? And I can never apply God's Mercy to my self by Faith, whilst I distrust the Truth and Sincerity of my own Repentance.

*Min.*



*Min.* A *quiet Conscience* does, indeed, entirely depend upon the *Opinion* a Man has of his Repentance being sincere, and accepted of God: But because a Man may mistake his Case, a *quiet Conscience* is not always a *secure State* with respect to God: For if a Man believe he has repented truly, and yet has not, he is never the nearer Pardon for thinking himself pardoned; and if he be fearful he has not repented as he ought, he may yet have done so, notwithstanding his Fear, and consequently be pardoned of God, although he think he is not pardoned. So that it is plain a Man may have a *quiet Conscience*, when he is really in great Danger; and a *troubled Conscience*, when he is indeed forgiven, and secure of God's Favour; and you can never believe that God will judge Men finally by their present Assurance, or Despondency, but by the Truth and the Sincerity of their Repentance. The Church does not therefore understand by a *quiet Conscience*, a full Assurance in every one that his Repentance is so perfect and sufficient, that it must certainly be accepted of God; but such a trust in God's Mercy, as that if a Man be duly qualified, he shall be certainly accepted of him, and forgiven. Some Mens Sins may be of such a Nature, as that they shall be sorely perplexed to understand what sort of Repentance is necessary to the obtaining Forgiveness; and to this End, they are called upon to advise with their Spiritual Guides, who are presumed to be able to instruct them, and set them Right. Others are so overwhelmed with the Sense of their Sins, that they think they are too great for God's Pardon; and these People are also advised to come to their Pastors, that they may learn the true Extent of God's Mercies in Jesus Christ, and what it is will qualify them for Forgiveness of their Sins. This is *the quiet Conscience* that the Church requires of her Communicants; a Conscience well informed of the Nature of God's Promises and Threats, and of the Nature of Repentance, and of its own State and Condition.

*Par.* If I understand you Right, you say, that *the Quiet* of a Man's Conscience depends upon his *Opinion* and *Perswasion*; but his *Safety* and *Security*, upon his *Practice*; God accepts him, not according to what he believes of himself, but according to what he *does*, and truly *is*. If, therefore, upon a serious Examination of my Life past, I find I am in earnest very much concerned for having offended God, and steadfastly purpose to do so no more, and, by the Assistance of his Grace, resolve to lead a new and better Life for the Time to come, and firmly believe that if I do so, God will, for Christ's Sake, accept of my Repentance, and enable me more and more to walk carefully before him: If I do thus, I may, you say, come to the Sacrament, although I may be still afraid of the Deceitfulness of my own Heart, and of the Truth and Sincerity of my Repentance, having often broken my good Resolutions before, and fallen again into my old Sins: This Fear and Doubting of my self will not prejudice me at all.

The Thing that follows is, *to bear a thankful Remembrance of Christ's Death*: That is, I suppose, that when I commemorate the Death and Sufferings of Christ, in the Sacrament, I must lift up my Heart to God, and thank him for giving his Son Jesus Christ to die for me; I see a great deal of Reason for so doing; for if he had not died, I must have perished; I can never therefore Remember his Death, without remembering the Deliverance I obtain by it: And as I value that, so I shall certainly be thankful.

*Min.* You say Right: Remember by what Means you have escaped Death, and shall obtain Life and Happiness everlasting, and that will raise your Gratitude to God, who hath done so great Things for you. The Church lays mighty Stress upon this thankful Heart, as there is great Reason, and it will be to your Use to observe it.—In the first Exhortation—She says, *It is our Duty to render most humble and hearty Thanks to Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, for that he hath given his Son our Saviour*



viour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our Spiritual Food and Sustainance in that Holy Sacrament. And in the Third Exhortation; *Above all Things you must give most humble and hearty Thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the Redemption of the World, by the Death and Passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and Man.* And at the End of the same—*To him therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual Thanks.* And in the Service—the Priest exhorts, *Let us give Thanks unto our Lord God;* and the People answer—*It is meet and right so to do.*—So when the Bread is delivered—*Take and eat this, in Remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him, in thy Heart, by Faith with Thanksgiving.* And when the Cup,—*Drink this, in Remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.* And in the Prayer after, we desire of God, *that he would Mercifully accept our Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, and heartily thank him for that he does vouchsafe to feed us, &c.* From all which Passages, you will easily conclude, the Lord's Supper to be a *Feast of Joy and Gratitude.* And therefore I should be glad you would come to it without those Fears and dreadful Apprehensions that appear so visible in the Countenance and Behaviour of many good, devout People, who, I dare say, have no true Cause for such a Concern.

*Par.* I suppose it proceeds from their Humility, and a deep Sense of their Unworthiness, and I hope there is no Harm or Danger in it; it is as like to be my Case, as any Body's else.

*Min.* No, none at all: I do not blame it by any Means: But if you will be advised by me, you shall endeavour to avoid it; for Fears distract the Attention, and the Mind is bewildered by them, and considers not the Work it is about, so well as it desires to do. Think, that though you are a grievous Sinner, yet God is infinitely merciful: Think, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not Perish, but be saved: And you are now commemorating that Death that has made Attonement for the Sins of the whole World. These Considerations may dispel all your Fears; but if they do not, there is no harm in them; it will be your Misfortune to want those Comforts that you might well have; but there is neither Fault nor Danger in wanting them: The *Heart* is as *secure*, but not as *easy*, under *Fear*, as under *Joy* and good Assurance. Repent but truly of your Sins, and leave them, and the Work is done; the Rest is to be left to God, in whose Hands you never will miscarry, how fearful soever you may be of your Condition.

*Par.* God be thanked, that our Safety depends not on our Hopes or Fears, but upon his infinite Goodness, accepting what he himself enables us to do. Let us come, if you please, to the *last Thing* requisite; and that is, *the being in Charity with all Men.* What if my Friend prove False, Injurious, and Endeavour to undo me? Must I still trust him, love him, and favour him, as I used to do? What if he seek to take away my Estate, to hurt my Reputation, or assault my Person? Must I endure this patiently, and seek no Remedy, but treat him in the friendly Manner I was wont?

*Min.* No, nothing of all this: Christianity obliges you to hate no Man; to do no Man any Injury; to *seek* no Revenge; nor to *take* any, though it might be done with Secrecy and Safety: Nay, it obliges you to pray to God for the Forgiveness of such as may have injured you in the highest Measure, and obliges you to deny them nothing that is due in Justice, in Humanity, and Mercy. Their Enmity and ill Usage will never excuse you from doing them any sort of good Turns that are due to them, as Men or Christians. But this will not hinder you from defending your self from any Injury or Violence; from recovering what is your own; nor from bringing upon them whatever Mischiefs the Laws will inflict upon Transgressors. Christianity will not hinder you from breaking off Friendship with one,



one, who has shewed himself unworthy of it; much less will it require you to continue him in that Confidence and Trust, he has heretofore been in, but forfeited by Falshood and ill Usage. In a Word, you must not *hate*, but you may *dislike*, any one that injures your Reputation, Fortune, or your Person. You may cease your Friendship, but not your Readiness to do all good Offices: If you have injured any one, you must be reconciled and make amends; and if any one has injured you, you must pray to God to forgive them, and so forgive them your self, as to return them no Evil for Evil, nor take any Advantage against them to their Prejudice. And if your Adversary be unreasonable, and will not be reconciled to you, it is enough that you desire it, and shew your self disposed to it. It would be difficult and endless to tell you, what you should do in as many Cases as may easily happen; if you find your self at a stand, you had best Communicate your Case to some prudent and good spiritual Guide, who will easily tell you what is to be done in the Matter. Remember only, that to be on the forgiving Side, is Wisdom, and Pleasure, and Superiority; it is to do bravely, and to be a good Christian.

*Par.* And this, you say, is all I have to do.

*Min.* You see the Catechism says so; and the *First* Exhortation before the Communion says so. And so does the *Third*, which is always read—*Judge therefore your selves, Brethren, that you be not judged of the Lord—Repent you truly for your Sins past—have a lively and stedfast Faith in Christ your Saviour—Amend your Lives—and be in perfect Charity with all Men—so shall you be meet Partakers of those holy Mysteries.* And when this Exhortatory Prayer is done—the Church begins again—*Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your Sins,—and are in Love and Charity with your Neighbours—and intend to lead a new Life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy Ways—Draw near with Faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your Comfort.* And I pray, observe that there is nothing *New* required of you, but what you were before obliged to, by Virtue of your Baptismal Covenant: And whether you receive the Sacrament or no, you must repent, amend, trust in God's Mercies, and live in Love and Charity with all Men, you must do them *always*, and you are call'd upon especially to do them *now*.

*Par.* You will now give me leave to ask you a few Questions, in the General, and I shall make an end of this Trouble. How much Time must I take, to come to the Sacrament prepared, as you have been describing?

*Min.* No certain Time can be assign'd for that; and I would not have you scrupulous about it: Since this is the first Time, you shall do well to examine your Conscience thoroughly, and look carefully back into your Life past, and see wherein you have been faulty, or neglectful; consider especially the Sins of your Inclination, and those to which your particular Calling, and way of Living, expose you most; consider well the Temptations that draw you to them; that you may resolve with good Assurance against them, for the Time to come, as well as truly repent of what is past. Do this very well at first, and then, a Sober, Virtuous, and Religious Life, will keep you constantly prepared, and fit to come to the Lord's Table. You may take as much Time as you please to prepare your self before-hand, by Reading, Prayer, and Meditation; but I dare not say, that this or that Portion of Time is so necessary to it, as that you shall offend if you spend it not in those good Exercises. The Church has made no such Rules, but supposes, that if you live like a good Christian, a little Time will fit you for the Sacrament. And truly, as you are a Man of Business, do you but say your Prayers constantly, live virtuously, and exercise your Calling honestly and conscientiously, and I do not see but you may be in your Shop on *Saturday*, and be a good Communicant on *Sunday* Morning.



Morning. To be heartily humbled before God for our Sins past, is *an act of the Mind*. To resolve stedfastly to live better for the Time to come, is *an act of the Mind*. To believe that Christ died for our Sins, and to be thankful to God for that infinite Mercy, are *Acts of the Mind*. And so it is, to forgive all that have injured us. All these preparatory Things are *Acts of the Mind*, and quickly performed. And therefore take but Care to live well, and you shall always be duly prepared to come to the Communion. And when you consider how frequently the Primitive Christians went to the Sacrament, and yet were *Lawyers, Tradesmen, Merchants*, and followed other Employments, you will conclude that an innocent and virtuous Life must fit one for the Sacrament, without a *Week's*, a longer, or a shorter Sequestration from Company or Business. I do not say this, to blame any one who takes these Courses before the Sacrament; for sometimes it is necessary, and sometimes good and fitting: but that you should not think your self always obliged to take the same Course; or abstain from the Sacrament, because you have not had *that Time* to spend in holy Exercises. It is a Misfortune that one can give no Rules that will fit *all* Christians; and that the best Rules will hurt some or other, if closely followed. Discretion is the best Director in the World.

*Par.* Would you have me to come to the Sacrament *Fasting*, or may I do otherwise?

*Min.* If you consider the Institution, nothing of that Kind is necessary; for it was instituted *after Supper*. Nor has the Church of *England* made any Rule about it. Where therefore neither the Laws of God, nor those of our Superiors, have obliged us, we must use our Prudence, and do what we find best. If you find that Fasting makes you more Devout and Serious, and gives you a better Frame of Mind, you will certainly choose to go to the Sacrament *Fasting*. Or if it be indifferent, and you are much the same, whether you fast, or not, and find it makes no Change at all in you, then you will choose to fast in Decency, and with regard to ancient Practice. But if you have, by Custom, contracted such a Habit of Eating or Drinking some light Matter every Morning, that you should be uneasy, or disordered without it, then you will choose to do as you used to do; because the purposes of Fasting (which are to raise the Mind to God, and put it into a better Frame) are better answered by moderate Refreshment, than by wholly abstaining: I do not suppose that any one makes a full Meal in a Morning, that is not going to strong Labour, much less upon *Sunday*. And I take the Meaning of your Question to be, Whether you may eat or drink *never so little*, on the Morning you come to the Sacrament? And to that I say, that neither God, nor the Church, has appointed the contrary: But yet I would *advise* it, where the Inconveniency of doing it is none; but not advise it, if there be *any* Inconveniency in abstaining. Only Remember, that whether you abstain, or not, you do it without Scruple your self, and without censuring what another Person does, though contrary to what you do. Do in this, and in all other indifferent Cases, what you believe will tend most to your Spiritual Edification your self, without Regard to what other People do.

*Par.* Will you give me any particular Directions how to behave my self during the Solemnity?

*Min.* When the *Offertory* begins, open your *Common Prayer Book*, and with your Eye (not *Voice*) read along with the Minister, and make what short Application you can to your self, of what is read; there you will find you are reminded of being *Charitable*, in general, to all that stand in Need; and, in particular, of being *Just* to those who are your spiritual Guides; and giving them at least what the Laws and Customs of the Place have allotted them. And if you find you have been wanting either in this Cha-  
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rity or Justice, you will resolve to make up those Defects, for the Time to come; for, assure your self, you will be highly unjust, if you detain from them, what is their due, both in Law and Conscience, as much as any Debt is due to your self. When these Sentences are over, then follows the *Prayer for the whole Estate of Christ's Church*, with which you must be sure to join in Heart and Spirit; and never pretend to use any other Prayers or Meditations of *your own*, or out of any other Book, whilst the Minister is praying the Prayers *of the Church*; for these are the best and properest for the present Purpose, and you must join with the Congregation in their Attention, and say the *Amen* with them, that you may reap the Advantage of that common Fervency, with which those Prayers fly up to God. When this Prayer is done, then follows the *Exhortation*, (which I have still called the *Third Exhortation*) to which you must most seriously attend, for it is full of excellent Information and Instruction; it shews you the great Benefits of coming *worthily* (i. e. *with a true penitent Heart, and lively Faith*) unto this Holy Sacrament: And the great Danger of coming *unworthily*, i. e. without repenting of your Sins, and without trusting in God's Mercies, through Christ. And pray Remember, that there is no other Sense of the Words, *worthily* and *unworthily*, than coming *with*, or *without* Faith in Christ, and sincere Repentance of Sin; and that whoever comes *worthily*, that is, repenting truly of his Sins, and believing that God, for Christ's Sake, will certainly forgive all such as Repent and Leave their Sins—whoever comes thus, comes *worthily*; and whoever comes *worthily*, receives the *Benefits of Christ's Body and Blood*, and *dwells in Christ, and Christ in him*, and *is one with Christ, and Christ with him*, whatever those Phrases signify, and whether you understand them thoroughly or no. And to your Comfort, moreover, whoever comes *worthily*, escapes all those Dangers and Mischiefs whatsoever they be, that are expressed by—*being guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour—eating and drinking our own Damnation—not considering the Lord's Body—kindling God's Wrath against us—and provoking him to plague us with divers Diseases, and sundry kinds of Death*. These are hard Things all of them, and some of them hard to be understood; but, whatever they signify, however grievous and hazardous they are, to the Souls and Bodies of Men,—they are all avoided and escaped, by coming *worthily*, i. e. by Faith in Christ's *Merits*, and repenting of our *Sins*. And therefore, if there were a thousand more such terrible Expressions, (as I could wish there were fewer than there are) let them not frighten you, or give you any Trouble. Repent, and believe, and all is well. When this and the next Exhortation are ended, you come to the *Confession of Sins*, in which you must join with the Minister both in Heart and Voice, for you are much concern'd in it; but when the *Absolution* (which is next to it) begins, then hold your Peace, and attend to the Minister with all your *Heart*; the Custom is, in some Places, for the People to say a soft *Amen*, at the End of every Sentence, and there is nothing indecent in that Practice. But for any one to repeat the *Absolution*, Word for Word, with the Minister, is so absurd, and shews such Ignorance, that one would wonder any one should fall into that Practice: *Absolution* is the Work of God's *Minister*, and belongs to him *alone*, in God's Name. The *Peoples* Part is to be silent, and *attend*, and to say nothing but a most earnest *Amen* to that excellent Prayer. And, pray, believe me, once for all, that nothing fixes the Attention like Silence; and let me warn you to observe in all your Publick Prayers, that you join with the Minister where you are bid, and at all other Times be *silent*; attend and make it your own, by saying a hearty *Amen*. The observing Order and Decency in Prayers, tends much to Edification; whereas the contrary begets Distraction, and disturbs both your self, and your Neighbours; it offends devout and understanding People mightily, to hear Men and Women say their



their Prayers absurdly and indecently, holding their Tongues where they should speak and join, and joining with the Minister aloud, where they should only hearken, and say *Amen*; but what can be more improper, than to hear them promiscuously absolve themselves and one another, and taking the Priestly Office on them, in a Part of it, which is one of the most distinguishing he has? When the *Absolution* is over, attend most diligently to the *Sentences of Scripture* which the Minister is to read; and when he bids you *lift up your Heart to God*, you must be sure not only to do it in Word, but in Deed, and great Earnest. When the Prayer of Consecration is over (and not before) you will have some Time before the Bread and Wine are brought to you, which you must employ as well as you can, either in Prayer, or reading something proper to meditate on, on that Occasion; and to this purpose you may furnish your self out of some good Book of Devotion. But be not much discouraged if you cannot fill up all that Space with regular Devotion, or with intense Meditation; do as well as you can: Remember your own Offences with as much Sorrow as you can; and the Mercies of God to you in Jesus Christ, with as much Love, and Joy, and Gratitude; resolve in earnest to amend in what Particulars you find your self most faulty; and ask of God the Grace and Power, to put these good Resolves in Execution; and that the Merits of this saving Sacrifice which you are now commemorating, may be extended and applied to you, in the Forgiveness of your Sins, and all other Benefits of Christ's Passion. Recommend to God's Mercy your Parents and Relations, Friends, and all the World: Do any Thing that is good and proper to fill up the Time, and employ your Thoughts till the Minister come to you, to give you the consecrated Bread and Wine.

*Par.* And then, I suppose, you would have me raise my Devotion to the highest pitch I can.

*Min.* Yes, I would have you very intent upon what you are about: But take good heed, lest, while you are striving to raise your Heart, you be not lost and bewildered. Strive rather for a Serious and composed Mind; let your Devotion be rather *regular* and equal, than *exalted* and *transported*: Attend gravely to what the Minister says; and when he has repeated that excellent Prayer—*The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting Life*—be sure you say softly a most hearty *Amen*. For, is not that the Thing you come for and desire? When he has said,—*Take, and eat this, in Remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy Heart by Faith with Thanksgiving*—take it, and whilst you are eating it, make some such Prayer as this—*Grant, O Lord, that the Sense of this thy infinite Mercy, shewed to Man in so much Misery, may never depart from my Mind! Let me, from henceforth, die to all my Sins, and my corrupt Affections, and live alone to Righteousness and Virtue! I steadfastly believe thou diedst upon the Cross, to save me from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, O give me but the Grace to walk with a thankful, honest Heart before thee! Accept of my imperfect Sorrow and Repentance, imperfect Faith, imperfect Resolutions, and let the precious Merits of my Lord supply the Rest, and make up what thou seest is wanting!* When the Minister delivers the Cup, and says—*The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting Life*—be sure you say *Amen*; for there it is most proper, and there it was formerly placed. When he has said—*Drink this, in Remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful*—take it, and drink very *moderately*, regarding neither Thirst nor Pleasure in that Draught. And after you have done, you may make some such short Prayer, as you did after the Bread—*O let my Soul be washed and cleansed in the Blood of Jesus, that was shed for me! and let me never be unmindful of this Mercy, but give thee*  
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Thanks, not only with my Lips, but Life, by giving up my self to thy Service, and walking before thee in Holiness and Righteousness all my Days, through Jesus Christ my Lord; to whom, with thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever! But let me remind you, that you do not pretend to repeat, either aloud or softly, the Words which the Minister uses, in delivering the Bread and Wine; your Business is to attend soberly to what he says, and to say *Amen*. I tell you this, because an idle Custom has prevailed, of Peoples repeating what the Priest says; to the Disturbance of the Priest, and to the Hindrance, I dare say, of their own Devotion, which would be furthered by a grave and silent Attention; which I take all Occasions to recommend to you. And that your Mind may be employed, whilst the Rest are communicating, you will choose to say some good Prayers, or read some short Discourse, seasonable and proper; and if that do not hold out to the End, you may listen to the Minister delivering the Bread and Wine to the Communicants, and say a hearty *Amen* to each of them, for that is praying for the greatest Blessing God can bestow upon them---the *Preservation of their Body and Soul to everlasting Life*. And when all have received, and the Minister returns to his Prayers, be sure you be not unready to join with him; nay, though you should not have ended your private Devotions, yet break them off, though in the middle, and join with the Publick ones, for that is better, and your Duty; and so go on with him, in Heart, till he have made an End. After which, you will, in a short Ejaculation, ask of God the Forgiveness of all your Coldness, Wandring, and Indifference, or worse Thoughts, during the whole Performance; beseeching him to preserve in you, a lively Sense of his infinite Mercies shewn to Man in Christ Jesus, and that you may go home more and more confirmed in Virtue and holy Resolutions, and abide in his Favour to your Life's End.

*Par.* I thank you, Sir, for your Care in thus preparing and conducting me, from the beginning of this Solemn Performance to the End of it; and in particular, for those Hints of Things, that to wiser People may appear little, and needless, but to me, useful, orderly, and tending to Edification, if I rightly observe them. When all is over, I suppose, I shall return home, mighty well satisfied, full of Unction, Joy, and holy Consolation, assured of God's Favour, the Forgiveness of my Sins, and everlasting Happiness.

*Min.* It may be not: One may be in God's Favour, without being assured of it; one may have his Sins forgiven, without knowing or believing it; and one may be (in the Purpose of God) everlastingly happy in the World to come, and yet be miserable and desponding here. These Things, I think, we have already spoken to, and agreed in them. In this you may be fully satisfied, that if you truly repent you of your Sins, they shall certainly be forgiven; and you shall certainly be happy; but that is in the World to come; and whether you shall have the Comfort of believing your Sins forgiven, at such a certain Time, *at*, or *after* the Receiving the Sacrament, is not quite so sure. No such Joy, or Consolation is annexed, by any Promise of God, to the worthy Reception of the blessed Sacrament; the Benefits are indeed secured by God's Promise to the worthy Receiver, from whence that Joy may reasonably result; but the Party may, by some Indisposition of Mind, not be filled with it; and let me now advise you, not to expect, or depend upon any such unusual Lightness or Consolations; but if they follow, it is well; if not, there is no Harm or Danger in the Want of them. Prepare your self by true and sincere Repentance, and come with Faith, and as well disposed as you can, and leave the Rest to God; you will have the Satisfaction of having done your Duty in the best Manner you could, and with that you must be



content, for the Rest is not in your Power. I have known many good People disconsolate upon this Occasion; by being disappointed of such Expectations as their own warm Imagination had only raised in them, without any Reason, or Promise made on God's Part. They came away cold and little affected from the Sacrament, and thought their Hearts must have been filled with devout Transports; and because of this, they fell into deep Concern, and believed they had not prepared themselves as they ought to have done, although upon examining their Hearts, they could not justly charge themselves with any considerable Omissions, or Negligence in that Work. And therefore be not discouraged, if you find not that Content and Pleasure after your coming from the Sacrament, which you may hope, and wish for before. Go on steadily in the Ways of Virtue, and do your Christian Duties constantly; and whether you feel the sensible Warmths and Comforts of Religion or no, yet you shall never want, at length, the just Rewards of it; *those* depend upon Uncertainties, *these* upon God's Goodness, and Truth, which cannot fail.

*Par.* How oft, *Sir*, do you think it necessary for me to come to the Sacrament?

*Min.* No body can answer that Question better than your self: You must consider where you live, and what Opportunities you have of doing it, and what Reasons you shall have not to communicate, where you have Opportunity. But be not however very scrupulous in the Matter; do not think you offend God, if you do not lay hold of every Opportunity offered you, by the Place you live in; nor think it sufficient, that you Communicate thrice a Year, (as the Law requires) when you may do it every *First Sunday* in the Month, according to the Custom of the City where you live. Fail not to observe the Law of the Land; and be sure to have regard to the Custom of the Place; and think upon the Advantages of serving God, and coming to this holy Ordinance, and then your Piety and Discretion will direct you, how oft you are to communicate; let not *little* Occasions hinder you, nor *great* ones please you; do not look upon it as a frightful or dangerous Duty, but easy, safe, and beneficial. And I give you these Cautions now, that you may begin with right Apprehensions of the Matter; for the first Impressions generally last, and People go on and End, much as they enter on this Duty.

*Par.* I thank you, *Sir*, for this Warning, and good Advice, which I will make the best Use I can of: But I wonder much to hear you tell me, that this is not a frightful and hazardous Duty, when the Communion Service is so full of dreadful and amazing Threatnings, that I have known both understanding and religious People much discouraged and perplexed by them. We are told in the second Exhortation, that *the Danger is great, if we Receive unworthily, even eating and drinking our own Damnation*. And in the first—that *to come unworthily, is but thereby to increase our Damnation*—and, that *the Devil will enter into us, and fill us full of Iniquities, and bring us to Destruction both of Body and Soul*. There is hardly any Thing able to support a Man's Spirit under such Apprehensions. I suppose these Things are all of them exactly true, and not Exaggerations: And if they be, I leave you to consider, whether a Man may not as well venture not to come to the Sacrament, as venture the Hazards of coming *unworthily*, and thereby increase his Damnation.

*Min.* Remember (what I have observed before) that to come *unworthily*, is to come without any Repentance or Sorrow for past Offences, and without any Resolutions of Amendment for the Future. And such a coming as this, must necessarily increase a Man's Damnation, because he does apparently despise his Saviour, and insult his Holy Ordinance; the whole Design of which, and almost every Word of which, supposes Sorrow for his Sins past, and purposes of Amendment for the Time to come. It is like a *Jew's* coming to be baptized, who hates Christianity



Christianity in his Heart, and intends to affront that Sacrament, but comes to serve some secular Interest and End: Or if he comes not with Contempt and Malice, yet he makes a most solemn Profession of a great many Promises, none of which he has any design of keeping. Now such a one must certainly be in a worse Condition, than if he had never been baptized, and his Baptism must certainly increase his Damnation. And must it not be the same, with those who come to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and there pretend most solemnly to repent and be sorry for their Sins past, and to vow all holy Obedience for the future, and yet do neither, but purpose to continue in their grievous Sins? Or if they do not positively purpose to continue in their Sins, yet have no Intention to leave them. Such coming must unavoidably increase Damnation, because here is a new and most provoking Sin, of mocking Christ's Ordinance, added to his old Impenitence. But, truly, I believe, as well as hope, that not one Sinner in a hundred thousand comes to the Sacrament without a general Repentance, and some sort of Resolution of forsaking his Sins, though it be faint, and loose, and ineffectual. And of such, I know not how to conclude that they thereby increase their Damnation, any otherwise than they, who, without coming to the Sacrament, make such kind of Resolutions frequently, and yet forget and break them, may be said also to increase their Damnation; since every new Sin does certainly add to our Misery, and more and more endanger our Souls. I will therefore yield to you, that *to come unworthily*, is a greater Venture, than *to stay away*; if by *Unworthily*, you mean a positive Intention not to leave your Sins, but still to continue in them. But if by *Unworthily* you mean such a Repentance, and Resolution of leaving Sin, as though when it is made, is hearty and sincere, yet afterwards proves ineffectual; then I will not yield, that to come *Unworthily* is more dangerous than to stay away; because the breaking a good Resolution (not intended to be broken when it is made) is not a greater Offence, than not to make that Resolution, although you were obliged to make it. *Caius*, a great Squanderer, owed me a hundred Crowns, and upon my Demand, promised to pay that Sum at six Months End, according to his Obligation; the Day came, but not my Debtor; for though when he made that Promise, he was in great earnest, and seriously intended to take up, and discharge himself, yet he fell into his old loose Courses, and was thereby disabled from approving himself an honest Man. *Titius*, another Squanderer as great as he, owed me the like Sum, under the like Obligation, but when I called upon him, made me no Answer, affirming afterwards that he would not Promise, because he intended not to leave his ill Courses, which would certainly disable him from paying his Debt. Am I more obliged to *Titius*, for not promising, because he intended not to perform, than to *Caius* for promising, and intending to perform? Do I owe him more Favour, who refuses to promise what he is in Reason obliged to promise, and in Justice to perform; than I owe to him, who promises in good Earnest, and intends at that Time to perform, though afterwards he forgets and fails? Put these two Men under equal Obligations, and equal Abilities of discharging them, and you will see, to which of them most Kindness is owing from the Creditor. To promise, with a purpose of not paying, is to deceive me, and abuse me; and to promise with a purpose of paying, though he do not Pay, is only to disappoint me. I say, therefore, (to make a short Application) that to come to the Sacrament, with a general Sorrow and Concern for Sins past, and a general Resolution to live better for the Time to come, although Men afterwards fall into Sin again, and forget their good Resolutions, is not a worse and more hazardous Thing, than to stay away from the Sacrament, without any Repentance at all of past Sins, or any Resolutions of living better, but going on still in their old Course of Wickedness. If it were, indeed,



deed, a voluntary Thing, and left at Peoples Liberty, whether they would come to the Sacrament, or stay away, then it were safer not to come: But since it is a Duty laid upon Men by Christ's Command, and all Men are obliged to come, by Virtue of the Obedience they owe to their Saviour, I can see no Safety in refusing to come; and this refusing to qualify themselves and come, must as certainly increase their Damnation, as coming less qualified than they ought to be. I would not encourage any one to come *Unworthily*, i. e. without Repentance, without Faith, and without Charity; for certainly such coming must be hazardous. But I can see as much Hazard in disobeying Christ, in refusing to come as he Commands, because Men live (and still resolve to live) without Repentance, without Resolutions of Amendment, without Faith, and without Charity. In a Word, there is no Safety but in Repentance and Obedience, both of which, by the Grace of God, are in every Christian's Power. And to that Grace I leave you, beseeching him who is the Author of that, and every other good and perfect Gift, to bestow them, in such Measure, on us all, that we may most religiously discharge both this, and every other Christian Duty, in the Manner that we ought, to the Glory of his Great Name, and the Salvation of all our Souls in the Day of our Lord Jesus.

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## S E R M O N

Preached *September the 7th, 1704*, being the Day appointed for the Thanksgiving.

T O T H E

R E A D E R.

**I***T is somewhat strange, that I, who have been forward enough to submit to the Orders of my Superiors, and comply with the Requests of my Friends, in publishing many Sermons, should now be constrained to publish one against my Will, without Command, and without Request. But so it is, that a certain Person, (unknown to me) who took this Sermon from my Mouth, in Characters, must needs think himself obliged to print it, without my Consent; and was resolved, it seems, to do so, if I would not take care of it my self. He had, indeed, Honesty enough, to give me Notice (by another Hand) of his Intentions; but not enough to keep him from invading his Neighbour's Right; which I must needs blame in him, though I have Reason to think his Purpose proceeded from no ill Principle, or Disrespect to me. It is to this secret Violence I give this Sermon up; and rather chuse to publish it from the Original, than let it come from a Copy which cannot possibly be perfect; thinking it much better to prevent Mistakes, than to be at the Pains to correct them afterwards; though I very much dislike the being under a Necessity of doing either.*

I KINGS xx. 11.

*Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his Harness, boast himself, as he that putteth it off.*

**T**H E S E Words contain the wise Reply which the King of *Israel* made to the most insolent and unreasonable Demands of *Benhadad* the King of *Syria*: That Prince had besieged *Samaria*, and reduced it to great Straits; and having sent his Messengers (upon *Ahab's* Desire, we may well presume) to agree upon the Terms either of Peace, or of Surrender, they told him, that his Gold and Silver, his Wives and Children, even the goodliest of them, should be at the Disposal of the King of *Syria*. The King of *Israel* not knowing how to help himself, sent him a civil and submissive Answer, that all he had should be at his Disposal, and signified he would become tributary to him, and hold, as it were, all he had from him. This Easiness and tame Submission of *Ahab*, did but provoke the *Syrian* King to greater Insolence; and by his next Messenger, he demanded Things abundantly more extravagant and hard than at first. Then, it seems, he would not be content with the King's Treasure, but would send his



Servants, and rifle the whole *City* of whatever he found should please him in it. Upon this, *Abab* advises with his Elders and Counsellors (who were now concerned as much as he) what to do in this Extremity; for now it is plain, the *Syrian* fought not for Sovereignty alone, but intended their utter *Ruin* and *Destruction*. His Council advised him unanimously, not to hearken to any such unreasonable, extravagant Demands, but rather venture all that could happen, since worse than what was asked could hardly happen to them. Upon which Advice, the King takes Heart, and sends the *Syrian* Word, that what he had first engaged for, he would still make good, but he could go no farther. Upon which *Benbadad* sent again to him this proud imperious Menace, — *The Gods do so to me, and more also, if the Dust of Samaria shall suffice for Handfuls, for all the People that follow me.* He threatens him, that though *Samaria* were a large City, yet should it not be able to afford a handful of Dust to every one of his Soldiers, he would bring so many up against him. To which the King of *Israel* answers only in this wise Maxim, or Proverbial Speech, — *Tell him, I say, Let not him that girdeth on his Harness, boast himself, as he that putteth it off.* Tell him from me, the Issue of War is very uncertain; it is Time enough to boast, when that appears successful: There is many a one girds on his Armour in great Gaiety and Pride, that has it pull'd off by his Enemy to make a Trophy of. It is good to kill the Beast, before we part his Skin; the Booty must be taken long before it is divided; bid him be wise, and see the End of Things, before he threaten such Destruction; he that puts off his Harness, is assured of Victory, whilst he who puts in on, has many Things to fear. This is the Meaning of the King of *Israel's* Answer; and in it, as it was occasioned, there are these Things observable to our Advantage. *First*, That great Power and Command makes Men usually insolent in their Behaviour, boundless in their Desires, and very extravagant in their Demands. But, *Secondly*, That a wise Man, who seriously considers what the Event of Things may easily be, by the great Variety of Accidents not foreseen, or not to be prevented, will moderate his Desires, pursue Ends that are reasonable, and live in Justice, whatever Hopes of Success his present Advantages may give him.

*First*, Great Power and Command makes Men usually insolent in their Behaviour, unreasonable in their Desires, and extravagant in their Demands. All Men have it in their Will to govern, and be absolute; few consider the true Use of Power, or use it rightly when they have it. The true End of Power, is to obtain their Will; but then their Will is evermore to intend some general good, or something that is good for themselves, but by no means inconsistent with the General one: And therefore, when more (who should be benefited) are prejudiced by any particular Exercise of Power, than are benefited by it, it is manifest that Power is there abused. There is no Man living can be vested with a rightful Power of doing Injury and Mischief; it is contrary to the very End and Nature of it; for *all Power is of God*, and he himself has none of doing wrong. The most arbitrary Prince in the World, is as unjust when he exercises his Power to the Prejudice of his Subjects, as the most limited one, when he transgresses express Laws made for their Security: For the good of Subjects is as much intended and supposed in arbitrary, as in limited Governments; only the Means of Redress are not the same, but differ according to their Constitutions. The Subjects have tied themselves not to withstand the Power that is certainly exercised to their Mischief in one case; but the Prince is nevertheless faulty, though unaccountable: The End of Government, is the Good of Mankind, and that is the Obligation of all Rulers; and whoever discharges not that, offends against both God and Man, though God alone may punish him. An Exemption from Punishment, does not alter



alter the Nature of Offences. A Prince may be as great a Tyrant in *Turky* as in *England*, though the one governs by his Will, and the other by known Laws; because the End of both Governments is the same, namely, *their Good*: And Laws are but as so many particular Determinations of People, to procure the Publick Good by such and such Means; which, in arbitrary Governments, is left to the Will of their Princes, and whom they please to use. So that it is manifest, there neither is, nor can be, any Power committed to any Man, but what is intended for the Publick Good, and supposes that will follow.

But be the End of Power what it will, and never so good, we see by Observation and Experience, the more uncontrouled Power any Prince has, the more Mischief he generally does with it; the worse he uses his own People, the readier he is to injure and insult his Neighbours: So that the *Abuse* of Power is almost as natural as the *Desire* of it; there being very few that look beyond themselves, and the Gratifications of their own Desires; accounting that to be the Publick Good which they aim at, and own publicly, though never so destructive of it.

But the Mischief rests not at home; it were well enough if they alone, who are unhappily subjected to this lawless Government, were miserable by themselves, and wore the Bonds they tamely chose to put upon their own Arms: But it spreads like Infection, and is the Cause of all its Neighbours Mischiefs; *it makes War cheap*, which is the Parent of all Evils. It is in the Hands of a Man that is Cholerick, Proud, and Haughty, Covetous, or Ambitious, under the Dominion of one, or many, foolish or wicked Passions;—it is in this Man's Hands to raise Armies, and maintain them as long as he pleases; it is in his Power to oppress, pillage, and rob his own Subjects, in order to the oppressing, pillaging, and ruining of those, whom either his vain Ambition, Cruelty, or Revenge, has made him *call* his Enemies. This is one of the saddest Effects of Arbitrary Power, that *it makes War cheap*, and resolves it easily into the Determination of every Passion a weak or wicked Prince may be subject to; it puts it into his Power to disturb his own Country, and every one's else besides; for if he were not absolute at Home, he could do no great Mischief Abroad. It is not certain, that the growing absolute of one Prince, would justify another Prince's making War upon him to prevent it; but it is certain that Nine in Ten of the Occasions of Princes warring with one another, are not so truly reasonable as this. It is more suspicious, and more hazardous, than building either new Forts, or Store of new Ships, or raising new Armies; he has it in his Power to do what Mischief a whole Nation is capable of doing.

And this is one of the Excellencies of our own Government, that though for wise and good Reasons, the Power of making War and Peace is put into *our Prince's Hands*; yet they can neither be lasting, nor of great Moment, unless the Wisdom of our Nation find them useful and necessary; by which Means, we are neither arbitrarily to be oppressed at Home, nor easily brought to make unjust Wars Abroad, to support Ambition, Vain-glory, Revenge, or Cruelty; none of which Mischiefs are to be avoided under Arbitrary Governments, where the Will of one determines all.

There is nothing to be said to all this, but that Arbitrary Princes have Reason and Understanding like other Men, and that it is their Interest to have their Subjects Rich, and to spare their Lives; and therefore, that without Necessity, they will neither deprive them of their Wealth, nor throw away their Lives cheaply. And to this, the Experience of the whole World to the contrary, opposes itself; there being nothing plainer, than that they are extravagantly lavish both of the Lives and Fortunes of their Subjects. They never care to have their People Rich, (as Riches make them happy, and live easily) but that *they* may be enriched with their Spoils,



Spoils, whenever there is occasion. And in all such Countries, it is almost as dangerous to be very Rich, as to practise against the Government, and frequently as fatal; it has cost many a Man his Life in the *East*. And let a Man in *France*, that neither retains to *Court* or *Camp*, be known to be wealthy, and he shall quickly be constrained either to lend, or give, till he be brought to the Size of other People. Whereas with *Us*, a Man may be known to abound in Money, Goods, and Estate, to the greatest degree, and fare no worse than the poorest Man in all the Neighbourhood, in his Proportion: We have no such Thing as giving or lending *against our Will*, which is a great, but just Piece of Liberty. In a Word, all the Advantages of Arbitrary Government, may be numbered up in a short Line; but all the World can scarcely hold its Mischiefs. It is this that impoverishes its own Country, and troubles the Peace of its Neighbours; to this we owe so many unjust Invasions, Desolations of Kingdoms, and all the Barbarities of War, that fill the World with so much Misery and Mischief.

When a Prince finds himself obliged (as in all limited mixt Governments it is) to live by the Rules of Honour and true Justice, to advise with Men disinterested, and dispassionate, in all Affairs of Moment, and tied to govern by known Laws (the happiest Force a Man can possibly be under) he quickly sees his Interest lies at Home, to make himself and People happy; and is under no Temptation of unnecessary Wars, either to employ his bold and active Spirits that might otherwise disturb his Reign, or turn his Subjects Eyes from marking his Miscarriages at Home; for he who governs righteously and legally, has nothing to fear from his People. But when a Prince is entirely at Liberty; consults his own Inclinations only, or with such Counsellors alone as know them well, but dare not disapprove them; has no regard to Justice or Honour, but thinks himself the Rule and Standard of both, and sees his Subjects Lives and Fortunes at his Foot — every Passion this Man has, (it is evident) may stand for Reason, raise Taxes, and send out Armies, when and where-ever those blind Guides direct them.

I account my self never out of the Way, when I am speaking against a Government that is only to be trusted in the Hands of God Almighty, whose infinite Goodness, unerring Justice, and all-seeing Wisdom, make him incapable of injuring any of his Creatures; but which, in Man's Hands, is fruitful of a Million of Disorders, Mischiefs, and all sort of Evils; and which has troubled us, and all *Europe*, for a great while; and hath, at the Bottom, occasioned all the Expence of Treasure and Blood we have been at for more than Forty Years, either in assisting our Neighbours, or defending our selves.

Whilst *France* was governed by its Kings and Parliaments (as ours) it was as quiet and inoffensive a Neighbour as any other; but when it lost its Liberties, and came entirely into the Disposal of its Princes, it became just as troublesome and vexatious to its Neighbours, as the Humour of its Princes pleased to make it; and has ever since been instrumental only to Blood and Rapine; a formidable Power, sent out to execute the Orders of whatever evil Passion governs its Prince; sometimes to conquer Countries, to which he vowed with all Solemnity before God in Heaven, and God (he thought) upon the Altar; before all Saints, and in the Face of all the Courts of Justice, that he would make no Claim, but renounced all Right he ever might have had to them; and sometimes to chastise a whole offenceless Country for some imaginary Affront, or for retarding him in his *Race of Glory*; sometimes to ruin more than a Million of his own People, because they could not see with his Eyes, and understand with his Understanding, in Matters of everlasting Consequence, and where the Example of all the Kings of the World will justify no Man's Error. These, and all other his Attempts, as well as that at present, are  
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owing purely to that boundless Power he finds he exercises safely among his own People; for were the Government lodged in any other Hands that were to determine these great Matters, it were utterly impossible that so much Misery should be endured at Home, or so much Mischief done Abroad. No Ten wise Men in all that Kingdom, were they at their Liberty, would either advise, or assist such Enterprizes, as empty all their Treasures, and destroy the Lives of so many good Subjects continually, for nothing but to gratify the Ambition, or the Revenge of their Monarch; it is all the Effect of Arbitrary, uncontrouled Power, unhappily placed in the Hands of a vain Man, and nourished by a Train of unaccountable Successes. This is the Parent of that Insolence with which he treats the World; of those extravagant Demands he makes; and of those unbounded Desires with which he pursues the Enlargement of his Dominion. And this I was led to speak to, from the Example of that haughty and vain-glorious Prince concerned in the Text, whose Power exalted him to Insolence and Madness; and made him demand Submission so extravagant and senseless, as turned to his Destruction: And I the rather chose to insist upon the Mischiefs of this sort of Government, that we might see, and better taste the Happiness of *our own*, and be more thankful to God for it, and the more careful to preserve it in that due Temperament in which it stands; without endeavouring to exalt, or to abase the Princely Power, by which our Governour may neither be (according to the *Fable*) a *Stork*, nor yet a *Log*, i. e. may neither be useless by too little Power, nor mischievous by too much; the Extream into which almost all the Kingdoms of *Europe* have fallen, besides our selves.

Let us now see, in the *Second Place*, to the other Thing, which is so observable from the History, and the Answer which the King of *Israel* made to *Benbadad*; and that is, That a wise Man who seriously considers what the Event of Things may easily be, by the great Variety of Accidents, not foreseen, or not to be prevented, will moderate his Desires, pursue Ends that are reasonable, and live in Justice, whatever Hopes his Advantages may at present give him.

They who have lived in the World to any Years of Observation, must needs perceive, (and feel in part) that all Things in it are subject to Vicissitude and Change; that there is such Uncertainty in them, that one can intend and design nothing future, without foreseeing a great many Accidents that may defeat our Expectation, and apprehending many more; that as soon as we have formed any Project, though never so just and honest, our very next Thought is employed, in trying to prevent a Disappointment; and that no Care, no Wisdom is sufficient to secure our End, but there will arise more than a Probability of our miscarrying: And therefore, that all a Man can do in this World, is, to intend Things just and fitting, honest, and creditable, and to pitch on Means that are in Reason right and proper, and leave the Issue in the Hands of God; for, what it shall be, no Man living can Answer. We must indeed intend a certain Issue, and reasonable Agents cannot well do otherwise; but a certain Issue is not in our Power; we are therefore only to take care, that we neither pitch upon such an *End*, nor try to compass it by such *Means*, as, upon a Disappointment, will either give us Shame or Grief; our *Virtue* shall not be questioned for our *Design*, nor our *Discretion* for the *Ways* we took to bring it about. This is all we have to do, and all that we can do; and whoever does not this, will be always blamed both by himself, and all others.

The only Temptation to forego this cautious, wise and just Way of proceeding, is, that Men now and then succeed in their most unjust Enterprizes, and then neither value nor think of Accidents, Uncertainties, or Change, or Chance: This is sure, but this is not Ground enough for any wise Man's Venture. A Man must



take the whole of Things together, to measure his Wisdom or Happiness by; a Man may draw blindfold, the Lot he would have chosen with both his Eyes and Understanding; but then he owes it to Chance, and values not his Wisdom or Choice in the Purchase, and knows, moreover, that a Lottery is one of the unlikeliest Ways in the World of growing Rich.

Success indeed in one bad Enterprize, is a Temptation to another; but a *Temptation* is seldom a good *Reason*, especially if that Success itself was accidental, as it usually is; and I am now speaking of what a Man should do, who Reasons and Considers; and there, I say, that nothing but what is Just and Right, should be depended on; because there are more Disappointments than Successes happen to any Man, and every Man is to provide for what is most likely to befall him.

Now, as War is one of the most complicated Affairs in the World, and takes in the Consideration of an Infinity of Particulars, and consequently must depend upon numberless Uncertainties and Accidents; so it ought to be undertaken with the greatest Deliberation, and managed with the greatest Circumspection; its Successes are to be used with the greatest Moderation and Humanity: its Losses born with the greatest Fortitude and Patience.

*Fortune*, that governed all, according to the Heathens, was represented *blind*; and *Victory* had *Wings*; and though some Generals chained her to their Chariots, yet this was in Picture only, and done with great Vanity; for she was never, willing or unwilling, steadfast always to any one Side, but fluttered up and down with great Uncertainty. We Christians know of no such Things as *Chance* and *Fortune*; but know that God above governs the World, and disposes well of all Events: But Providence, *i. e.* his way of ordering and disposing them, seems to us so varying and uncertain, *i. e.* we know so little of it, that for want of a more proper Name, we call it *Chance* and *Fortune*; but we only mean thereby, to set forth our own Ignorance of God's Disposal of Affairs. But, however, the same Uncertainty and Instability of all Things appearing by the Events to us, as did to them, we are to make the same use that they intended by those Emblems; which was, That People should neither wax insolent under Success, nor yet Despair under Loss and Disappointment, since all Things were so subject to change, and might consequently change from bad to good, as from good to bad. It was a very wise Saying, and frequently in the Mouth of our late King, *That Campaigns do not always end as they begin.* The Observation of which kept him still in good Temper, neither haughty nor desponding; neither apt to refuse good Terms, nor ask unreasonable ones: A thing so common, that one may say, Success has hurt more than it has profited, by elating so the Mind, that it has overlooked all Reason; and by extravagant Demands, has lost its true Advantages, and thrown the Adversary upon other Measures: For he who demands Things unreasonable, teaches Men to deny what might be fit to grant; as he who denies Things reasonable, teaches Men to ask Things that were not so before. We need not go out of our own Memory for Examples of both these kinds.

The *Turks*, not many Years ago, upon the great Successes of the *German* Emperor, proffered such Terms of Peace as were exceeding honourable and advantageous to the Christians; but Success had so exalted them, that they would none of them, but on Conditions that could not, they knew, be complied with: The following Campaigns taught them better, and they were glad of Peace upon much worse Terms, the Loss of a very great City, and a great Tract of Country round it, which they might otherwise have kept. It is fit that every thing insulting and unreasonable should be so served, and that they who are blinded by their good Fortune, should also be misled by her; and taught to be more wise and moderate by Loss,  
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and by Repentance. He who asks an unreasonable Rent (to mix small Things with great) for his House, will have it, you know, stand so much longer empty, which usually brings the Matter, though not the Man, to Reason.

The other Instance is of a Prince, with whom we are just now concerned, who having Offers made, both safe, and honourable, and advantageous, is, by refusing them, to all Appearance ruined, at least for some Years; and (which is worse by a great deal) has already ruined most of his People and Country; though I confess, such strange Overights look rather like just *Infatuations*, than the Effects of bare Inconsiderateness; for what can be more reasonable, than that they who prefer a private Humour, or a private Interest, to the publick Good of their Country, should suffer all Extremities; but, if it could be, by themselves? Though now, unhappily, the Country suffers more than he; which, were it possible to be avoided, should. But that is the Unhappiness of all Relations, they must be punished for another's Sake, in hopes that the Concern for them, will restrain Men from such Actions as will bring Mischief (they know) on those whom they are bound to love, and look after, and preserve from all Evil; and the Relation betwixt a Prince and his Country, being the same with that of Husband and Wife, or Father and Children, the one is intended to be punished in the Afflictions of the other. But (to return) both these Princes, the one in making extravagant Demands, the other in refusing very fair and reasonable ones, seem to have little Thought upon, or to have quite forgotten the Uncertainties of War, and the many little Accidents on which the Success of Battels depends.

And thus it was with *Benhadad*, the King of *Syria*; he had reduced the King of *Israel* to extremity, and offered him then very hard Terms, which yet were accepted; but *then* his Insolence and Madnes would impose much harder, and that reduced him to Despair; and that Despair excited more Courage and Resolution, than any thing reasonable could do; and God came in, and interposed, and curbed the Extravagance of that haughty Prince, and brought him to intercede with the despised Adversary, even for *his Life*. And then, I suppose, he saw the Wisdom of King *Abab's* Caution, *Let not him that girdeth on his Armour, boast himself as he who putteth it off*. A great many Accidents happen betwixt the girding on, and the putting off a Man's Armour; sometimes he is forced to fly away with it; sometimes he is wounded in it; sometimes he is stripped of it whilst living; and sometimes dead, and never sees it put off. This is but the Figure, but the Meaning in general is, (as we have seen) that they who begin War, know not where it will end, and therefore should be cautious how they enter, and know when to put up the Sword in Time, and not be betrayed by a little Success to carry Things on unreasonably.

We have seen, in our Time, (we have seen indeed nothing else but) a great King's Ambition troubling the Peace of all the World, for more than forty Years; tempted by a most disastrous Conjunction of weak, voluptuous, and ill-governed Princes, his Contemporaries, to raise what Armies, and to send them where-ever he pleased; invading, wasting, and insulting all who were unhappily within his Reach; insomuch that the whole Christian World, who had for five or six hundred Years reckoned, and called the *Turk* the *Common Enemy*, have of long Time, with one Consent, translated that abhorred Title to *Him*. And after all, what are the Fruits of this Perfidy and Violence? So ill a Fame was never gotten for so small Advantages. What are the Accessions made to *France*, that are equal to such an immense Treasure, and such a Multitude of his Subjects Lives, as they have cost him? I think no History can readily afford us such another Instance; That a Prince who was absolute Master of one of the finest Kingdoms in the Earth, and  
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had a People so active, and so slavishly submissive to all his Orders; who hath raised such numerous Armies, which have fought so many Battels, taken so many Towns, and wasted so many Countries, should at last have so little to shew for it: He has, like Creatures of voracious Appetite, but ill Digestion, swallowed down much, but been constrained to give it up again. The *Emperor*, with all his Poverty and Weakness, hath kept five times more Country and Advantages than he, within the Compass of twenty Years; and might have had much more, had he (as I observed before) but been more reasonable in his Demands; and might moreover have had what he has, without any Danger or Disturbance, had he but learned that Lesson that is, it seems, so hard for Princes to learn, (though Reason, Interest, and Conscience, teach them nothing else) namely, to love his People, and leave them to their just and ancient Liberties. I cannot think, but that both Friends and Enemies are equally to be blamed, whose Subjects live miserably; and I see an Instance also here, of what I have before remarked, that they who withhold and deny Things reasonable, put People in the Way of asking Things unreasonable; which seems at present the Case of the *Hungarians*, with respect to their Sovereign. But this a little by the Way; when I was seeking what were the visible Fruits of such a long continued Violence of War, as *France* hath exercised on all her Neighbours; and he who looks into a *Map*, may quickly see that every Foot of Ground hath cost him most extravagantly dear; it hath cost him the Impoverishment of his own Kingdom, as well by the Extirpation of a Million at least of his Protestant Subjects, as by the Death of some Hundreds of Thousands of his Soldiers; and hath raised him up the Enmity and Hatred of all the World about him; and *the End is not yet*: He hath not yet put off his Armour, he hath occasion still to think of *Abab's* Maxim in the Text; his Lands require its Tillers; his Vines their Pruners; and his Trade calls for those labouring Hands that are now wasting in unprofitable and destructive Wars.

Let them call this Country *Happy*, and this Government *Good*, who measure out a Country's Happiness by the Splendor of a luxurious Court, the Gliftrings of the Soldiery, and the Equipage of some great State Officers, who are, it may be, not one to five Thousand of those who live most miserably and poorly. Strange Happiness to *us*, who think a Kingdom's Happiness consists in the Happiness of Prince and People both together.

This great Oppressor both of his own, and other People, has at length, it seems, obtained the End he always sought for, the Possession of the *Spanish Government*. But is that Peaceable, or like to be so? Has is not raised him such an Opposition, that he knows not what to do withal? Were it, in Truth, as much the Interest of the World, to be revenged on *Spain*, for its so pitiful and vile Submission to its Yoak, as it is to secure itself against the Tyranny of *France*, nothing could be better done, than leaving that wretched People to enjoy their *New Masters*; but as it is, Interest, Honour, and Security of themselves, have raised him as many Enemies as the Conjunction of those two Monarchies can make; and what will be the Issue, no Man living can certainly tell; but in all likelihood, this unreasonable Grasp, which fills his Hands too full, will make his Hold less sure by a great deal; so that that which he thinks the Crown of all his Labour, is likely enough to weigh him down, and to compleat his Ruin. And the great Success with which it hath pleased God to bless his Enemies, (and which occasions our assembling here at this Time) is a most promising Prefage, that the Day of his Humiliation is at hand: He never had so much to do, with so little Ability of doing it, since he began to trouble *Europe*; nor has he ever received so great a Blow as now, when he is less than ever able to bear it. If that good Spirit, Unity, and Conduct, that has  
lately



lately appeared, go on with us a little farther, the oldest of us all may live to see the Foundations of such a Peace and Security laid, that it shall not be in the Power of this ambitious Prince to disturb it.

He hath lost (by utterly undoing him) the only Prince that could be brought to fight under his Banners; his Friendship is as fatal as his Enmity; and that, I hope, will be a lasting Fruit of this great Victory, that all the Princes of the World will open their Eyes upon the sad Examples his destructive Alliance has lately made, and let him fight his unjust Battels by himself. One may very well apply on this Occasion, the Message of the King of *Assyria* to the King of *Judah*, to those undone Princes, who have unhappily joyned Hands with, and depended on the Power of *France*. *What Confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest (but they are but vain Words) I have Counsel and Strength for the War. Now on whom dost thou trust? Behold thou trustest upon the Staff of this bruised Reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a Man lean, it will go into his Hand, and pierce it; so is Pharaoh, King of Egypt, to all that trust on him.* I believe it is as plain to all considering People, that he was the Ruin of our late unhappy King, as it is visible to Men that have their Senses, that he has now ruined the Two *Electoral Brothers*, though not by the same Methods, yet by the Consequences of a like Alliance, Conjunction and Friendship with him.

Some are dazzled with the Lustre of that Power that ruling by an Army gives, and like the Example strangely; others are caught by the Profusion of that Wealth that arbitrary Princes only can afford, because they feel not, or regard not the Misery of their People, whose Lives and Labours must supply that Bounty. But such Examples should, methinks, have some *Instruction* also in them; and the Conclusion make the last Impression on the Mind, and what that is, the whole World sees, and wonders at: *Three Examples* in one Reign, one may well hope, will be all.

If I have shewn, that arbitrary Power has been the cursed Root, from whence most of the Wars that have afflicted *Europe* during our Time, have sprung; by enabling a Prince of unmeasurable Ambition, to raise what Armies he thought fit, and to maintain them, by laying what exorbitant Taxes he thought fit upon his own People, to invade what Countries he pleased, to desolate what Provinces, to sack what Cities, to insult what States, his Vain-glory or Revenge suggested to him, and to make what high, extravagant Demands he would; and that by a natural sort of Justice, all this has turned to his disadvantage, disabled his own People from affording the Assistance he at last wanted, and arm'd the mightiest Powers of *Europe* against him, who have already broken his greatest Strength to pieces, and are in the Way of gathering more and more Fruits of this great Victory: If I have done this, I have done what I principally intended, namely, proved to you, that nothing but Justice, Honesty, and true Honour, can be lastingly depended on; that nothing besides can make a Victory relish well, or bear Defeats and Disappointments; and the same that Justice and true Honour are to *Kingdoms* and great *States*, are Virtue, Honesty, and Fair-dealing, to *private People*. The Power of doing Mischief and the Opportunities of gaining by Injustice, are but so many insidious Ways, by which vain Men are tempted to Destruction; but he that is Wise and Honest, overlooks them all, and will consider what may happen; not trusting to Success, but to the End he aims at, and to the Means he pitches on, whatever be the Issue; for the Issue makes neither Man nor Cause the better, but only happier, or unhappier, with respect to the Affairs of this World. And I shall not think I have quite forgotten the Business of this Day, if I have shewed you, by the Way, the Occasion of this War, the Grounds of our Confederacy, the Importance of this Victory, and the great Likelihood of our gathering more and more Fruits from it; for by these Means, you will have seen what Reason we



have to give God Thanks for it: And I am the less concerned, because we are only to do this Day, by Authority, in Publick, with one Consent, what I dare say every good *Englishman* hath done already in his Heart over and over by himself of his own accord, namely, returned God Thanks for the great Success he hath been pleased to give us.

We have neither Friend nor Enemy *Abroad*, that will once imagine any *Englishman*, of the *Reformed Religion*, can be displeased at such a Victory; and they would wonder much, if we at *Home* should let them know we *had*, especially when King *William* had no Hand in it; for that, perhaps, with them, might have disturbed the Joy of any Triumph.

They are indeed very unfortunate, who mourn on these Occasions, which promise an Establishment to the Religion of the Country, the Securities of our Laws and Liberties under the best of Constitutions, which lay Foundations of a lasting Peace, that we may reap the Fruits of a wise and righteous Administration, under the happy Government of a most excellent, and virtuous, and religious Princess: That have so gloriously maintained the Honour of the *English* Arms, discovered to new, and as it were, unknown Countries, such Courage and such Conduct in our General, Officers, and Soldiers; and so good Discipline withal, that they were both amazed and pleased, and redeemed at the same Time. These Things merit the best Sacrifice that we can offer up of Praise and Thanksgiving, not only solemn, but sincere; for we have truly never had a greater nor more just Occasion in our Memory.

And as we owe to God *Praise* for these, and all his other Mercies, so let us pray him, of his Goodness, still to have our *Queen* under his gracious Favour and Protection; that her Reign may be a long and lasting Blessing to these Nations; to preserve for hers, and all our sakes, our *General* wise, and brave, and fortunate; our *Officers* as valiant and intrepid; and our *Soldiers* as courageous and obedient, as they have hitherto been; and bring them home in Honour and in Safety to their Native Country, there to receive the Blessings and Rewards of such as venture Life, and all they have, in the Defence of their Religion and their Nation.



T H E

# RELATIVE DUTIES

Of *Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants*; consider'd in Sixteen Practical Discourses: With Three Sermons upon the Case of *Self-Murther*.

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To the Inhabitants of the United Parishes of *St. Austin,*  
and *St. Faith.*

MY GOOD FRIENDS,

**A**FTER Fifteen Years Experience of your kind Acceptance of my Labours with you, in the House of God, I have no cause to doubt but some of them will be also acceptable to you at your private Homes: And, of them, I have chosen such as I believed might be of the most spreading and most lasting Advantage, rather than such as might, possibly, please some People better; as being very desirous of having my Relation, and Affection to you, recommended to your Minds, in the most useful Manner, whenever God should please to part us from each other.

The Design of Christianity is to make People happy in this World, as well as in another: And the Way it takes to do this, is to make them Good and Virtuous whilst they live, by the Discharge of all the Relations they stand in to each other, whether Natural, Civil, or Contracted; i. e. by performing their Duty to their Neighbour. And therefore, if I can help to make you good Relations, you will, I know, be so far good Christians. But of this you will see enough in the following Discourses.

There is, indeed, no want of Printed Sermons in the World, abundance of very learned and useful ones being daily put out: So that I do not pretend to supply any Defect of this Nature, or to correct the Mistakes of any. But I use the Liberty I have in common with other Writers, and give you some of mine among the Rest. And if I say, I believe you will be something readier to read mine, than those of others, you know (as I said above) the Relation I have long had to you, will somewhat justify such Expectation, and will a little excuse me, should I be mistaken. And there is, moreover, something in Variety that is very inviting, which may tempt others to read these Discourses as well as you; and I am very sure that whoever Reads them, will be no Loser by it, and should be very blameable in putting them out, if I did not think so. And that is one great Use that we may make of People's Levity, or Want of Judgment, in liking or disliking this or that Man's Way of Preaching; that, amidst so great Variety, they will find something to like, and profit by; which if they do, we are to account our Labours well employed, and well paid for. To make these Discourses more useful, there is something Casuistical in most of them; and such Rules, I hope, laid down, as will enable a Man of tolerable Judgment, and honest Mind, to determine safely in most Cases that ordinarily happen in Humane Life. In the First Sermon, I have endeavoured to treat Matters in so plain and easy a Manner, that, I hope, even very young People will see and understand the Reasons of their Duty: In the rest, I suppose



*suppose more Years and Consideration to make them useful. And, indeed, in all of them, I have had especial Regard to Citizens, and Men of that Condition, intending them mostly for their Service; whose Wants as I thought I best understood, so I was sure I owed them my best Assistance.*

*And because I thought that one Discourse would be as much as would be usually Read at any one Time, I have taken care, by a short Repetition of its Consequence, and Connexion with the foregoing one, to make it in some sort compleat by itself, not trusting much to People's Memories. When I had made an End of these Discourses upon Relative Duties, the Volume, it seems, was found too small for some Purposes of the Bookseller, though big enough for my own, who only intended to treat of them; and therefore I was prevailed with to add Three more against Self-Murther, which, I hope, will not be without their Use, since that abhorred Practice seems to gain some ground among us.*

*As these Sermons were chiefly intended for your Benefit, so I have chosen to direct them to you, that they may both appear, and be more yours than any one's besides: And if you shall, on your Part, account yourselves, in any Measure, credited by such an Application to you; I shall, I assure you, on my own Part, account my self sufficiently repaid by the Civility of reading them with Care and Diligence: There being nothing, but your true and lasting Benefit intended in this Work, by (GENTLEMEN,)*

Your most Affectionate Friend,

and Humble Servant,

W. F.



## DISCOURSE I.

EXOD. XX. VERSE 12.

*Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

**I**NTENDING (if it please God) to treat of the several Duties we owe to our Neighbour, *i. e.* to one another, in the several Relations we stand in, towards them; it is but fit to begin with that, which is, in Nature, Reason, and God's Appointment, to be first practised: And that is, the Duty of Children to their Parents, expressed in the Words of the Text, *Honour thy Father, &c.* In discoursing upon which Words, I will, *First*, shew, what is meant by *honouring* our Parents: And, *Secondly*, but conjunctly, shew the Reasons of our so honouring them: And, *Thirdly*, see to the Reward here promised, *That thy Days may be long in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

*First*, What is meant by *honouring* our Parents. To *Honour* signifies a great many Things, and takes its Sense, especially, from the Person it relates to. To honour *God* is one Thing; to honour the *King*, another; to honour our *Superiors*, a third: And to honour our *Equals*, or *Inferiors*, is a different thing from all the rest. And therefore the Word must not be taken in the same Sense, where-ever we meet it; but the Party, to whom it is to be paid, must determine its Meaning and Extent. And therefore, since it is the Intent of this Commandment, to secure the Duty of Children to Parents, the several Duties of them, in their several Instances, are comprehended in the Word *Honour*. When therefore we are commanded to *honour our Father and Mother*, we are commanded to *love* them, to *respect* them, to *obey* them, and to *succour* and *support* them all we can. *First*, we are commanded to *love* our Parents: But because, properly speaking, it is not in our Power (whatever we may think) to love or hate, to hope or fear, when, and what, and whom we will; but according as we apprehend the Thing, or Person desirable and lovely; and that, upon this account, it will depend much upon the Parents Management, whether the Children shall love with that Affection of the Heart, which both the Parents and themselves desire they should: Therefore, by being commanded to *love* our Parents, we are especially commanded to take and keep such Courses, as will most probably secure and increase our natural Affection to our Parents, and to avoid and decline all Things that may any ways diminish it. To love our Parents, is so natural, so reasonable, so fit, and so expected, that few have the Confidence to own the Want of it, even when they know, and grieve, perhaps, they have it not: And the Want of this Affection being oftentimes the Occasion of our denying them that Respect, Obedience, and Support, we certainly owe, and ought, unquestionably, to pay to them, it is to be improved and nourished by all the Considerations we can raise. How far the Consideration, of their being, under God, the Authors and Originals of our Life and Being, will contribute to the exciting this Affection, is not easy to determine. The Ancients thought it would go a great way, and therefore insisted much upon it. They seem to have been very fond of *Being*, as if it were, of itself, a great Blessing; whereas, if we consider it thoroughly, it is, of itself, no farther Good, than as it makes us capable of *receiving* Good; for if we are in Misery, our *Being* is then far from Good, occasioning us just so much Evil as we suffer; and, all that while, our *Being* is being miserable.



If God himself should create us, with Design of being miserable, we could not thank him, much less love him, for giving us such *Being*: Nay, should he make us to be miserable after this Life, and leave us to be as happy as we could, whilst we lived here; yet we could neither truly love, nor thank him, for creating us. The very certainty of being at any Time miserable, by his Appointment, must make him dreadfully odious to our Minds: And therefore when we thank God (as we daily do) for our *Creation*, it is upon this Account, that he has made us capable of being happy both here, and hereafter; that he has given us all the good Things of this World, *i. e.* Capacities and Powers of getting and enjoying them, and of attaining everlasting Happiness in the Life to come. It is always for something good, past, present, or promised for the future, that we thank God: And that is the sole Foundation of all Love; it terminates all upon ourselves, and our own Good; and where we neither have, nor do Experience that, nor have any Good in hope, or prospect, it is impossible to love: And therefore the Love that Children owe their Parents, upon the Account of receiving their Life and Being at their Hands, is only so far due, as the *Being* they give makes them capable of receiving and enjoying *other* Good.

It is true, that the very having given Life and Being to their Children, without any other Consideration, excites or creates a new and singular Affection to them, properly *Parental*; because we find the like in other Creatures, that are incapable of any Considerations: But yet, I question not but this Parental, Natural, and Irresistible Affection, is greatly heightened and improved in Reasonable Creatures, by the Hopes of deriving some Comfort, Credit, or Advantage from their Children: So that, although the Parental Love be the most disinterested of all Loves, yet it is truly selfish at the Bottom; proposing to itself Pleasure and Satisfaction, Honour and Credit, some Advantage or other from the Objects of its Love. But notwithstanding this, the singular and inexpressible Affection of Parents to their Children, deserves to be repaid with all the Love they can; because the Parental Love is hourly displaying and exerting itself, in all the beneficial Acts of Kindness it can think upon: It supplies all the Wants of helpless Infancy, secures from all the Hazards of heedless Childhood, and giddy unthinking Youth: It shapes the Body, preserves it strait and upright, and keeps the several Limbs in order, and fits them for their natural Operations, and makes the Person beautiful and comely. And, to do this, it bears with many Troubles, and incommodious Hardships; and though these Matters appear but slight, and are but seldom thought upon; yet the Defects and Miseries that befall, where any of this Care is slackned, or this Love abated, are not small or inconsiderable; they have, some of them, an Influence on us all our Lives.

But moreover, it is this Affection that informs the Mind, and regulates the Manners; that trains up the Reason, exercises the Memory, and instructs them to argue, and understand their little Affairs; and takes care to educate, and fit them for greater Matters: It is this, that brings them first to God in Baptism, and that keeps them after in the Ways of Goodness and Religion, by instilling into them wise and virtuous Principles; by reminding them constantly of their several Duties; by encouraging them in Good, with Kindness, Favours, and Rewards; and by reproving, threatening, and correcting them when Evil, or tending thereto.

These, and a thousand other, are the Ways that Parents take to make their Children happy; besides those endless and innumerable Labours, Watchings, and Sollicitudes, that consume their whole Life, to make them happy with the Riches and good Things of this World; so that whatever Benefits can be the Ground and Foundation of Love in Children, the Care and Love of Parents abundantly affords them.



them. And though the Parents are obliged, by Natural Instinct and Affection, *i. e.* by Principles of Love and Tenderneſs implanted in their Hearts by God, to do theſe Things, and take this Care of Children; and though they find their Pleaſure, and Account, in ſo doing (for God, who made this Love, and this Proviſion neceſſary, hath alſo, in his Goodneſs, made it eaſy and delightful to the Parent) yet is the Children's Love nevertheleſs due in return for the Parental one; becauſe that Love is founded upon Benefits received, or hoped for: And whatever might move the Parents, yet it is certain they deſigned the Benefits, and the Children find and feel them: And therefore are obliged to take the Remembrance of them into Conſideration, to excite and ſtir them up to love their Parents, who have done ſo great Things for them; and who were not only the Authors of their Being, but alſo, under God, of their Welfare, and their preſent Happineſs. And though the Parents Deſigns, and Endeavours after Happineſs, ſhould not ſucceed according to their Wiſhes, as very often they will not; yet ſince there is no Want of Love and Care in them, the Obligation on the Child is ſtill the ſame.

And I chuſe to make the Senſe of Benefits received, or at leaſt intended, and the Hope of Benefits to come, the Bottom and Foundation of the Filial Love; not only becauſe it is unqueſtionably ſo in Truth, and the Foundation of all other Love, and the true Cement of all Relations, and that which truly obliges to the Performance of all Duties, and makes them to become Duties, antecedently to all Commands, whether of God or Man; but alſo for the Parent's ſake, that they, knowing on what it is that Love is truly bottomed, and expecting, deſiring and approving nothing more than the Love of their Children, may take the greater Care to raiſe and ſecure this Love, by laying ſuch Foundation for it, that it cannot eaſily miſcarry; for this will ſhew them, that although the Fondneſs and the Blandiſhments of Parents will pleaſe and gain the Love of their Children, whiſt they continue childiſh, wanton and unthinking; yet when they put away childiſh Things, they will want ſome other Foundation for them to build their Affection on: The Love, that was built upon their Play-things, will vaniſh when thoſe are thrown away, and broken: And the Love, that ſhould ſucceed, will want another Bottom: And that muſt be a wiſe, a virtuous, and religious Education; and ſuch a reaſonable and decent Proviſion of Things temporal, that the older the Children grow, the longer they live, the more they advance in Reaſon and Underſtanding, the better they ſhall Love their Parents, the greater Reaſon, the juſter Cauſe they ſhall ſee for their ſo Doing; they ſhall ſenſibly feel the advantageous Effects of their Parents Care. And therefore, upon this account, it is oft-times much in the Parents Power to ſecure the Children's Love, by the Obligations they may lay upon them: And let all People, when they find occaſion to awaken and excite this Affection to their Parents within them, call to mind the many *Benefits* they have received at their Hands, as well as *Being*.

A *Second Duty*, Children owe their Parents, is *Reſpect*; that is, all external Honour and Civility. As Love comprizes all internal Honour and Eſteem; all their Behaviour is to be ſubmiſſive, dutiful and mannerly, and ſuch as becomes Inferiors towards their Betters. It is an offence againſt natural Decency, to ſee the Children bear themſelves upon the ſquare with their Parents, to answer them rudely or ſlightly, or to be wanting in Reſpect towards them, whether in Looks or Geſture, in unbecoming Words or Actions. And when Parents, through their Fondneſs or want of Judgment, are content to take off the Reſtraint, to remove the uſual Bars that kept their Children at due diſtance, and to admit them to Equality, it is great odds, but they repent it quickly: Few young ones know how to uſe their Liberty, before their Time. And beſides, it makes the Task of inſtructing  
and



and managing them much more difficult; for when the Awe and Check is taken off, (as it is by too much Condescension and Familiarity) your Counsels make but faint Impressions, and your Commands are constantly disputed. When Parents loose these Bands of Distance and Respect, if there be no Miscarriage on it, it is not owing to their Discretion, but to the Modesty and Goodness of the Children's Disposition. But I am speaking now of the Children's Behaviour, where the Parent has not made way for Disrespect, by any undue Relaxation of Discipline; it is to be full of Kindness and Good-nature, good Manners and Civility. They are obliged to say Things honourable of them, to pry as little into their Infirmities and Failings as they can themselves, and to extenuate and conceal them as much from others. And for this there is so much Reason and Decency in Nature, that it shocks us, unavoidably, to hear one reproach his Parents with either Vices or Infirmities, though what he says is true, unless it be done with great Concern and Tenderness, with Grief and Pity, and that to such as will make no scorn or mockage of them; but when they do it with Contempt or Pleasure in the telling, we cannot help abhorring such Impiety: The Hearts of all Men go along with *Noah*, in laying Punishment on *Cham* for his unnatural and profane Derision; and love the Memory of those Sons, that would not see themselves, nor suffer others to be Witnesses of the Miscarriage of their Father.

There is, in a word, no worse Token or Prognostick of a bad Disposition in Children, than to see them wanting in Reverence to their Parents, in any kind: It is probable they will never make good Citizens and Subjects to the Commonwealth, or good Relations of any sort, failing in those respects which are most due, and paid with greatest ease, and accepted the most kindly.

And that Children may discharge this Part of their Duty better, as it is partly in the Parents Power, so it should be their Care and Concern. They must be careful how they live, and behave themselves in sight of their Children, and what Examples they set them; for if they make themselves vile and cheap in their Children's Eyes, by too much Familiarity, by light and indiscreet Carriage, either towards them, or others in their sight, they will in vain expect that Reverence and Respect that is due to their Relation. The Foundation of *Respect* is some supposed Excellence and Worth; and, in this Case, some kind of Superiority; and when Parents admit their Children to an Equality, and make them conscious to their Indiscretions, Follies, and Miscarriages, they do but invite Contempt, taking away the very Foundation and Support of all Respect and Honour. The Children should not, if it could be hindred, be so much as Witnesses of any thing indecently said or done by Parents: All the domestick Differences, the idle and unseemly Quarrels and Debates, the simple and unkind Words and Actions, that much too commonly pass betwixt the Parents, should be concealed and hidden from Children: For they observe and treasure up these evil Follies; and, secretly, at least, side with the one, and learn to hate or to despise the other, or entertain, too soon, a mean Opinion of them both; which undermines all manner of Esteem and dutiful Observance.

Nay, and sometimes it comes to pass, that one Parent will, most unadvisedly and ungodlily, support the Children in Contempt and Disrespect to the other; and, to vex and wreak their Anger on each other, will make their Children miserable by Disobedience. This is a fearful Case, and a Thing they ought at no hand to do; for neither Parent has Authority to absolve the Children of their Duty to the other. And though one of them should be of evil Fame, and bad Example; yet is *Respect*, and all exterior Honour to be paid them, even when they can be neither loved, obeyed, or imitated by the Children: For this Part of honouring the Parents is always in the Children's Power, and always to be done: And therefore though the

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Case may sometimes be so hard, as that the Children shall not be able to pay Obedience to the several, and, sometimes, opposite Commands of their Parents; yet it can never happen so, that they shall not always be able to pay Respect and Honour to them both: And therefore, of this they must never fail, for the doing this can never be an Injury to either Parent.

And if one Parent should be so unreasonable as to require the Child to affront or disrespect the other, the Child would be safe in a respectful Disobedience, and Refusal; because no Parent has a Right of taking away another's Right; and each of them have equal Right to the Respect and Honour of their Children: And therefore the Honour and Respect that one requires at the Children's Hands, is of equal force to pay it to the other. It must indeed be paid to both, by all Children; and it is a most unkind and wicked thing, for any Parent to command, require, encourage, or be pleased with any rude, ill-natured and undutiful Behaviour of the Children to either of the Parents, upon any Provocation or Account whatever. Children are the Pledges of mutual Love, and the Cement of Affection: The use of them is, naturally to make up Differences; and it is sad, when they become occasions, or widners of a Breach.

But after all, there can be no such universally obliging Rules of Honour and Respect, as that all People should alike observe them: The common Usages, and Customs of the Country, are like to be the best Standard and Measure of Respect and Honour: And there seems to be a Respect peculiar to some Qualities and Conditions, that were not proper to be used by others. Only this I think may be observed, that the meaner People are, the less they look after and require this dutiful Respect at their Children's Hands: And they commonly fare the worse for it; there being abundantly more Instances of Rudeness, Stubbornness, Ill-nature, Disobedience, and Rebellious Carriage among the Children of ordinary and mean People, than those of better Quality and Condition; which should not be, for the poorest Parents have right to Honour and Respect from their Children, as well as the Rich and High; and they both might and would have it, if they would look after it in due Time, and require it of them; and it would be a great Advantage both to themselves and Children, to bring them up, though never so mean, in a respectful Awe, and dutiful Regard to their Parents; they would find their account in so doing, and reap more Comfort from their Children than they commonly do.

And what I said of keeping Children at a Distance, is also to be understood with Caution and Discretion; it does most commonly and naturally preserve Respect and Honour, and therefore it is generally best to be observed: But the different Circumstances of Parents, and the different Tempers and Dispositions of Children may make great Alteration; and therefore are to come into Consideration. Some Children and Young People are of so Modest a Temper, and so discreetly Educated and Behaved, that all the Liberty you give them, does them no Harm; they still preserve a lively Sense of Respect, and never go beyond their bounds, but demean themselves Decently in the midst of Favour and Indulgence: These would be hurt by great Restraint and Awe, and the Parent would lose a great deal of Comfort and Innocent Delight, by keeping such at too much distance. Others grow Wanton, Insolent and Headstrong upon the least Indulgence, and know not how to behave themselves under Liberty and Kindness; and fall from their Respect immediately, neither knowing themselves, nor others. This is the general Tendency; this is the Humour of most; and Liberty is hurtful to them: Restraint and Awe is best for these, and without them they are miserable.

The Difference of *Age* is also to be considered, as well as Temper, in the matter of Distance. It would be Weakness to expect the same Regard from the Elder



as from the Younger: The Elder must no more be wanting in Respect than the Younger; but they are each to consider what is proper and becoming them to pay; and so is the Parent too. No Age, no Quality, no Change of Condition, though never so much for the better, can exempt the Children from paying Honour and Respect to their Parents; but they will each of them make some Change and Alteration of the Expression of that Respect. This Honour and Respect of Children to their Parents, is not only Handsome and Becoming, but exceedingly useful to many good purposes in publick Government; and therefore all States and Kingdoms have taken care to secure them. And therefore I have chosen, not only to shew the Children the Reasonableness, the Decency and Necessity of it, and the Obligations they lie under from God's Command; but to excite the Parents also, to endeavour, what they can, to preserve and keep it up in their Children; having such Power, and so many Advantageous Opportunities of doing it, which they must not omit, both for their own, and for their Children's Sakes: It would be better, if they would try to *Punish*, rather than *Grieve* for the Sights or Disrespects shewed by their Children; they would certainly Grieve the less, and seldom.

And this would also make way for the readier and better *Obedience* to their Commands, which is the *Third* and Principal Thing to be considered, and certainly concluded under this Commandment, of Honouring our Parents. And indeed, without *Obedience*, Respect and Honour would be meer Formality, and Mockage. There is all the Reason in the World, that whilst Children want Understanding to direct their Choice and Will, they should have no other Will but that of their Parents; and therefore should obey whilst they do not Understand. Even Children themselves see this, as soon as they come to Reason in the least Degree: They see, that if they had been left to themselves, they had in many Cases come to Mischiefs; and therefore see how fit it was they should obey their Parents Orders and Commands. And People, somewhat older, see as much Necessity that *they* should do so too; and they themselves will see as much, when they have once outgrown their Childish Fancies. They will see that their Parents Wisdom, and Experience, and Capacity, was much greater than their own, and therefore fitter to Rule and Guide. I believe there are few People in the World, that have, whilst Young, disputed and repined at the Commands of their Parents, who have not afterwards changed their Minds, and found they were truly wiser, better, and more reasonable to be complied withal, than their own Wills and Humours; although for the present they thought otherwise. It is most likely that, having lived longer, stood higher, and observed Things better, they should be most in the Right, and give the best Advice. The Parents must needs discern what is most fit and proper for their Children: And therefore though they may be now and then mistaken, yet it is always safest to follow their Instructions and Commands. When Children obey their Parents, though they afterwards happen to miscarry; yet they have this to comfort themselves withal, that they miscarried in their Duty and Obedience; that they took the safest and wisest Course, and such as all good People approve; and every one is much more ready to pity and help such, under their Misfortunes, than such as fell into the like, through Stubbornness, and Self-conceit, and Disobedience. There is therefore all the Presumption in the World upon the Parents side, that their Advice and Commands are the wisest and most reasonable. And next, there is all the Certainty of the good Intention and Design that can be. Who should intend the Benefit of Children so much as the Parent? Why, they seem to live for no other End and Purpose, than to do them good; they have no other Aim than their Advantage; all their Care and Study, all their Thoughts are fixt



fixt upon them: They suffer a Thousand Inconveniencies for their Sake, and choose to live, sometimes, penuriously, and hardly, that their Children may live at Ease and Pleasure. And who should suspect the Counsels, and Commands of such, of want of Love and Kindness? And there is nothing more proper to persuade, than an Opinion that they do it out of Love, and design our Good thereby. Now no one can possibly be so assured of the Kindness and Good-will of any one besides, as of his Parents; and therefore the Commands of no one ought to be entertained with a better Opinion of them; and this would help to forward our Obedience to them. It would be well, if the Young ones would (as they are capable) consider a little with themselves. These Counsels and Commands come from People that have lived a great deal longer in the World than I, have made Remarks, and had Experience: They have had Parents themselves, and either followed their Advice, or repented of not doing it: It is true, the Duties enjoined me are unacceptable to me; they are such as I should not choose, and such as I do not like; but I have often found myself mistaken; and I have now no reason to think myself wiser than they, who persuade me otherwise than I am inclined: I am but of Yesterday, and know little; I have no Experience; and sure these Parents have not lived so long for nothing; Old Age has something in it good most certainly; Wisdom, Knowledge and Experience, commonly attend it, and make them fit for Counsellors: There is all the Presumption of Wisdom on their Side that can be. And then, for their Affection and Good-will, I have equal Reason to conclude on them also; there is no Body so like to wish me well as they; there is no Body has done so much for me, no Body grieves at my Miscarriages like them, or Studies and Endeavours to prevent them with that Concern and Care: Other People, as it comes in their way, give me good Counsel, and say the same Things, in effect, that Parents do; they warn me of the same Dangers, and exhort me to the same Duties; but I can plainly perceive there is a great deal of Difference betwixt the Mind and Concern with which our Parents speak, and those of other People, though good Friends. They speak with a lively Sense and Feeling, with Force and Affection, in great Earnest, and from the Bottom of the Heart: As if they were to endure the Evils, they warn us to avoid; and share with us the Miseries we shall undergo, if we follow not their Counsels; so that they seem to be exceedingly interested in our behalf: And yet it is evident, they can make no manner of Advantage of our complying with them; they can get nothing by us but Content and Satisfaction; all they have already is ours in Design, and all they are getting still, and intend or desire to get, is for us. So that we can suspect them of no Design upon us; and all these Things shew us most evidently, that what they say to us, the Commands they lay upon us, proceed from the truest, most sincere, disinterested Affection in the World. They are afflicted and undone when we miscarry; let *them* be never so wise, or rich, or honourable, *our* Folly, Sin and Disobedience, will make them miserable: Although they lose thereby neither their Understanding, Wealth nor Places; yet such is their Concern for us, that in all these Things they are not happy, unless we will consent to make them so, by being dutiful and obedient, and taking good and virtuous Courses: And, on the other Side, let us be never so wise, or rich, or honourable, all that our Parents get by it is Pleasure and Content, for which (instead of taking ought away) they lift up their Hands and Hearts to God, and bless us. And can I think the Counsels and Commands of such People are not the best that they could think on, the most kindly intended, and fittest for my Practice and Compliance?

None of these Considerations are above the Capacity and Understanding of young People, when they come to be capable of receiving and obeying Commands:



mands: There is nothing so plain and easy as to consider, that Parents love their Children dearly, and without Design; and are older, wiser, and more experienced than themselves; and therefore the fittest to command, and fittest to be obeyed. And though the Commands of the Parents do often cross the Children's Desires, and hinder them from pursuing their Pleasures; yet it is not because the Parents envy them their Pleasures, or deny them Satisfaction, to shew their Power and Authority; but because the Prosecution of their Desires, in these forbidden Instances, is criminal, and would be hurtful to them, although perhaps they see it not: They never command them to do any thing, but the doing it tends to the Children's Advantage; nor ever forbid them any thing, but what is hurtful in itself, or Consequences: And therefore, though the Children see nothing but Pleasure in what they propose; yet the Parents stands higher, and sees there is also Sin, or Danger near it; and sees how it will operate at distance, and what Fruits it will produce. And as they remember their Parents to have hinder'd them, when they were younger, from eating several Meats, or drinking several Drinks, and doing several Things, which they then liked, and desired to have and do, and grieved and repined at their Refusal, which, yet, they are now satisfied, proceeded from no Unkindness, but turned, as it was intended, to their Benefit; so might they learn to conclude, that the commanding them Things, for the present uneasy, and forbidding them Things, for the present sweet and desirable, may be full as reasonable, and fit to be complied withal; and that when a little Time is over-past, and the Season of Pleasure somewhat spent, they will be equally satisfied with the Care and Wisdom of their Parents. And this young People would do well to improve; they are capable of considering, and they ought to do it. Let them inquire of all the Neighbourhood, of all their Acquaintance that are grown up, and older than themselves (and the older still the better;) let them inquire of all, or any of these, and see how many there are that will tell them, It is better, safer and wiser, to follow their own Humours, than the Advice of their Parents; and how many, upon Experience, have succeeded in disobeying their Commands; how many there are who are not grieved at their Disobedience, and do not wish most earnestly they had complied with what was advised, or required of them: And when they find that all the World agree, that notwithstanding the present Desires, and the Uneasiness of complying with the Commands of Parents, yet it is better so to do; that they who have obeyed, are very much satisfied; and they who have not, are grieved and troubled, and wish they had: They will see they ought to conclude, that however unacceptable some Commands of Parents may for the Present be, yet it is better to yield to them, than to indulge to their own Humours; and that the united Wisdom and Experience of the whole World is a safer Bottom to proceed upon, than any present Longing.

These are some of the Grounds and Principles upon which the Obligation of Children to comply with, and obey their Parents Commands, is built, and depends: There are also others; but I rather, chose to mention, and insist on these, because they are such as young People themselves, who are principally concerned, may see the Reason of, and have Capacity and Parts to consider, that their Obedience may not be altogether blind and implicit; and because it is as probable, as any thing besides, that they are the Reasons, at the Bottom, of God's Command, that Children should obey their Parents: And are also the Reasons why these Children should themselves, when in time they come to be Parents, exact and require, and find Obedience at their Children's Hands. This every one expects, this all are naturally lead to: Where is the Parent that does not think it reasonable his Children should obey him, even against their Inclinations? And should



should not prefer *his* Wisdom and Experience to their own Will or Understanding? And trust to *his* Affection, Love and Favour, rather than pursue their own Humours? And upon the same Account and Grounds that any one expects Obedience from his Children, he knows he ought to pay it to his Parents. Now Children and young People observing (as they easily may) that Parents universally exact Obedience at their Childrens Hands, may very well conclude, that they shall do so too, whenever they come to be Parents; and may conclude, that there must certainly be good Reason in a Practice that all the different Nations of the World agree and center in. And if they can imagine that all the World could not agree in any Thing that was not reasonable and just, and yet agree in requiring Children to obey their Parents, they will quickly see that it is reasonable and just for Children to obey their Parents; for the Parents could not reasonably require it, if it were not reasonable that the Children should give it.

But lest these Reasons should not prevail, God makes it a Command, and bids us *Honour our Father and Mother*: So that he, who is disobedient now, offends against *Command* as well as *Reason*; against *God* as well as *Man*: And to shew us how fit it is to comply with, and obey our Parents, God calls himself throughout the Holy Scriptures our *Father*, and from that Title and Relation calls for our Obedience. And therefore stubborn, head-strong, disobedient and rebellious Children, ought to think upon these Things; to consider all the Ties and Obligations that they have, to be obedient to their Parents; the Reasonableness, the Pleasure, and Security of being so; the Approbation of all good People, and the Blessing of God that goes along with it: And, on the other hand, the Grief, and Trouble of Mind, the Sorrow and Repentance, at home, the Shame and Infamy from abroad, and the Displeasure of Almighty God, that attend and follow Disobedience to their Parents. They ought, I say, to think upon these Things, and whatever else may forward them in the Performance of their Duty. But because there are a great many Cases, in which the Children plead Exemption from this Rule; and in which they do not actually obey their Parents Commands, and yet defend themselves as no Transgressors of this Law; it may be of some use to see in what Particulars they are obliged to obey without Reserve, and in what they are at Liberty; that the Duty of Children, and the just Authority of Parents, may be both of them secured.—But of these Things in the following Discourses.

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## DISCOURSE II.

EXOD. XX. VERSE 12.

*Duty of Children to Parents.*

**H**AVING shewn, That under *Honouring Father and Mother*, is comprehended Loving, Respecting, Obeying, and Relieving them under any Necessity, I had only Time to speak to the Motives and Obligations, Children have to pay their Parents, Love, Respect and Obedience; and to excite the Parents to secure these several Parts of Duty from the Children to themselves, by all the Ways and Methods they could think on, as well for their



Childrens sake, as for their own Comfort: I am now, before I leave this Head, to consider some of the Cases, in which the Children plead Exemption from this Command; and to lay down such Rules as may, most probably, secure the Duty of Children, and the just Authority of Parents.

And, *First*, it is certain that all Commands of God must be obeyed, before those of Parents; if ever they interfere, our Duty to God is most undoubtedly to be preferred. The Counsels or Commands of Parents must never sway so far with Children, as to cause them to do what God forbids, or to neglect to do what God commands; because the Authority of God is first, and greatest; nothing is to stand in Competition with it; but then the Command of God must be plain and evident; it must not be a doubtful and disputed Thing; but full as certain, as that Obedience is due to the Commands of Parents: *Walk ye not in the Statutes of your Fathers, neither observe their Judgments, nor defile your selves with their Idols: I am the Lord your God, walk in my Statutes, and keep my Judgments, and do them*; saith God to his People, *Ezek. xx. 18.* In wicked and forbidden Instances, we are not to be led by their Example, Counsels, or Commands; but then must *hate our Father, and our Mother, and follow Christ*; *i. e.* prefer our Duty and Obedience to God, to all other Considerations. Thus if Parents should be so wickedly inclined as to command their Children to lie, to steal, to do Violence and Injustice, the Children must refuse, but with Respect; they are not at liberty to obey, they have an antecedent Obligation, they are tied by God to Truth, and Honesty, and Justice: *Children obey your Parents, in all Things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord*, saith St. Paul, *Colos. iii. 20.* But then it is explained in *Ephes. vi. 1.* *Children obey your Parents, in the Lord, for this is right*; *i. e.* according to God's Command and Will; for to obey them *against* God, can neither be right nor pleasing, and so we should have understood him had he not explained himself, and so we must understand him in all other Places. But of this there is not much Dispute; People do generally agree, that God is to be obeyed rather than Man.

But though Children are at liberty to disobey unjust Commands, yet are they not always at liberty to do or undertake even Things that are truly good and religious, without the Consent, or against the Commands of their Parents: That is, where the Thing to be done or undertaken, is not as certainly commanded by God, as it is commanded to obey our Parents; we are there rather to obey our Parents, commanding us not to do such Thing, than to do it, though it be truly good in itself: And such Obedience to Parents, would not be *obeying Man rather than God*; because such Thing is not expressly commanded them by God. The Case is common in the World Abroad, though it concerns *us* but little. To retire from the Business and Temptations of the World, into a Cloyster, there to devote the Whole of their Lives to Prayer and Meditation, and the more immediate Service of God, is certainly (with them) exceeding laudable, and religious; and to avoid Temptations, by Prayer and Meditation, is certainly commanded by God: But yet this is not lawful for Children to undertake without Consent, or against the Commands of their Parents; and the Pretences, that are made for such a Disobedience, are not strong enough to bear it out. They say, that *to serve God no Man need to ask Leave*: That is very true in the General; but as to the particular Manner of serving him, there may be great Need of asking Leave, because it may concern another: It may be to the Parents Prejudice to be defrauded of the Children's Service, or otherways hurtful to him.

They say, that *if the Father be Superiour, yet God is the Supreme; and hath more Right to the Children than the Parents have*: This is also true; but this Supreme hath bounded his Right by Commands, which are first to be observed, and after



after that the Parents. God hath a Right to be obeyed, and this no Duty to Parents can dispense withal; but then this Right is only to be known by his Commands: The Children cannot say, This is a good Thing that I am about to undertake, and therefore God hath a Right to my Performance of it, unless it be commanded; for many Things are good that are not commanded expressly to all People, but only to be done in Time and Place convenient, and by fit and proper Persons. And when Children withstand the Commands of their Parents, upon Pretence of pleasing God, they forget that God is best pleased with Obedience; and that they neglect to *obey* God, commanding them to obey their Parents, whilst they think to *please* him in doing a Thing that he has left them at liberty to do or not, and that their Parents would not have them do.

They say moreover, *That though the Parents have a Right over the Bodies of their Children; yet that they are to have the Disposal of their Souls, as being the most interested and concerned in them:* And this is also certainly true; but obeying the Parents Commands will not hurt the Children's Souls; their Souls may certainly be safe without their entring into a Religious House, and devoting their whole Lives to Prayer and Meditation. To serve God, and be very devout; to pray much, and meditate often; are very compatible and consistent with staying in the World, and obeying the Commands of Parents: But to disobey, and grieve, and it may be injure the Parents by such Retirement, are not consistent with Religion, and our Duty to either God or our Parents. So that to do well and wisely, we must obey our Parents Commands, of which we are certain, rather than certainly disobey them, in hopes of pleasing God, by pursuing our own Inclinations, of which there is no Necessity. The Children are indeed to dispose of their own Souls, and all the Reason in the World they should; because they are only concerned in them, and shall be answerable for them: And therefore if Parents Command their Children to be wicked and ungodly, or to do any Thing that might destroy or hurt their Souls, they were not to be obeyed, or hearkned to: If they should Command to renounce Christianity, or to despise Morality, it were nothing; they have no Right to Obedience: But when the Case is only of some particular Mode of serving God, the Soul is secure as well in one as the other; and the Pretence of greater Sanctity, and the more advantageous Opportunity of living holily, is not a Cause sufficient for a Child to withdraw himself from his Father's Power, to which he is justly subjected, and is not Master of himself, to give himself up to other Government, where his Parents shall have no more to do with him: And if it be true, that the Children's Bodies are under the Government and Disposal of Parents, it will be unjust to deprive them of that Power, under Pretence of taking care of the Soul, which may also be secured the other Way. The ancient Christians were very tender of the Childrens Duty to their Parents; and therefore would not admit any one to such Retirement, Monastick Discipline, or Vow of Celibacy, without the Consent and Goodwill of their Parents, though Things were then much otherwise, than now, or of late. And yet the Men, who by these Vows and Promises set the Children at liberty from their Parents, are so restrained by Sense, and the Reason of the Thing, that they will not admit any of the Male Kind to make such Vow of Religious Life till Fourteen or Sixteen Years of Age, nor any of the Female till Twelve; which does not at all justify them, for those are not the Years of Consideration and Discretion: The Light of Reason does but then begin to shine forth: They have commonly then just Wit enough to think they have more Understanding than they have; to be conceited, confident, and easily to be imposed upon by the gay Appearances, and pompous Snares, that are laid for them. A more mature Age, and a Disposition naturally propense to a devout and solitary Life,



Life, might make such Choice more reasonably to be complied with by the Parent; for Age and natural Inclination are the Things that most excusably emancipate and free a Son or Daughter, from following the Counsels or Commands of Parents: Though what that Age is, will best be determined by Custom and Consent of People. This Case is now out of Doors with us; and we have not any like it, that I can think on, where Men pretend to free the Children from obeying their Parents Commands, upon the Account of doing *a better Thing*, the giving themselves up to God. I only mentioned it, to shew, that though the Commands of Parents are never to be preferred to the Commands of God, yet that those Commands must needs be plain and certain; and that Children are not at liberty to withstand the Commands of their Parents, upon Pretence of doing Things truly good and religious, and *obeying God rather than Man*. When they obey God rather than Man (whom they should otherwise obey) the Command of God must be as evident as the Command of their Parents, *i. e.* they must be certainly God's Commands.

*Secondly*, It is also certain, that *the Laws of our Country* are to take Place of the private Commands of our Parents: That is, we are not tied to obey our Parents when they Command us any Thing contrary to the Laws of the Land; no more than when they Command Things contrary to the Laws of God. The Reason of which is this, that the Publick Good being greater, and to be preferred to any Man's private Good, and without which all private Men could have and enjoy no Good, it cannot be preserved but by Obedience to such Laws as are made to secure it: And therefore no one can have Right to such Obedience as would obstruct the Publick Good, which all Laws are presumed to consult especially: And a Man must not compare the Benefits he receives from his Parents, with the Benefits the Publick would receive by his single Obedience to the Laws, but with the Benefits the Community receives from the Obedience of every single Subject; and then he will see that it is more reasonable the Laws should be obeyed rather than any private Man against them; for if one Son may obey his Parent against the Laws, so may another, and then more: And therefore it is certain, that none may; for no one's Good is to be considered in Competition with the Publick. If a Father therefore should Command his Son to betray his Country, set the Capitol on Fire, blow up the Magazine, bear false Witness, give his Opinion contrary to the Laws, or be instrumental to the overthrowing the Constitutions of the Kingdom; he must not so honour his Father, as to obey any such Commands. He must say as *Agefilas* said to his Father, advising him to give a Judgment against the Laws; *You have your self, Sir, taught me to observe the Laws from my Youth up, and I am now going to obey you, in taking care to keep them.* They are, in all such Cases, to appeal to their Parents better informed; they are to presume them always willing, that the Children should do Just and Honest Things; and not so much to mind what they bid them do, when *Concerned*, as what they would have them do, when out of that Concern.

These are the two Cases in which Children are exempted from obeying the Commands of their Parents; when either the Laws of God, or of the Land interpose, we are to hearken to them. And even in these Cases, we are to disobey our Parents with great Modesty and Tenderneſs; not with Upbraidings and Reproaches, with high and scornful Refusals; but by declining and avoiding such Commands, with all the gentle Arts, and Methods of Submission possible. *Even in a Righteous Cause, the Language of the Children must be Humble to the Parents, saith Salvian:* Because they cannot, or will not Obey, they must not therefore Triumph and grow Insolent. One should not easily appear to Understand that any Wicked and Un-  
lawful



Unlawful Thing is commanded by our Parents: But at no hand we must comply with any such Commands. In other Cases, of Matters indifferent, Obedience is the sure Side; and yet there is great Regard to be had to the Age, and to the Circumstances of the Parents, before one can well Determine of the Obedience that is due: without considering these, and other Particulars, it will not be easy to pass a true Judgment in the most common Case, and the most necessary to be considered: And that is, the Marriage of Children without, or against the Consent of Parents; whether this be consistent with the Obedience due to Parents, and be not a Violation of the 5th Commandment.

It is not indeed expressly said in Scripture, that Children shall not Marry without the Consent, or against the Will of their Parents; but it is expressly said, that *they shall Honour and Obey them*; and it will be hard to reconcile Marrying against Consent, with Honouring the Parents; or Marrying against Command, with Obeying them. And, generally speaking, the Instances and Examples of Marriage, in Scriptures, are such, as shew the Parents had the chiefest Hand in making of them up. The Stile still was, *That such a one gave his Son, or Daughter, to such a one in Marriage*. So that the Law being given particularly to the Jews, and this being the general Practice amongst them, it is not unreasonable to think, they held themselves obliged by this Law, not to marry against their Parents Will and Consent: But whether obliged by this Law, or no, the Custom was such, that it was seldom otherwise. It is probable, that, in the Patriarchal Age, *Esau* might Marry against the Consent of his Parents; but *Esau* has all along a bad Character; and yet it is not certain that *he* married against Command; but only certain that his Wives proved very troublesome and vexatious to *Rebecca*.

It is also certain, that such was the Custom amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, two of the wisest and most civilized People of all the World. There would be no end of Citations, to this purpose, out of their Books; they are full of them: And though there must be many *Examples* to the contrary, yet are there no *Rules* or *Precepts* in favour of the Childrens Liberty; but when they take it, it is still with Blame. Nay, this Disposal of Children by Parents, is not only a Matter reasonable and fair, and approved by wise and good Men among them; and strengthened by Custom uncontrouled and immemorial, but it passed into Laws and Statutes. They reckoned there was no Marriage without the Consent of the Parents, and the Children were all accounted Bastards: And Christianity for a great while made no Alterations in the Matter; the Civil Laws of Christian Emperors confirmed the Opinion of the Ancients; and the Sentence of the Church went along with them: The *Canons*, and the Judgment of the best Writers, are all on this Side: They still make the Consent of Parents essential to the Contract. The Laws of our own Nation take no Notice of Consent of Parents; they trust it, I believe, to the Reason of the Thing it self, and to the Wisdom of all Ages, and to the Custom and Example of almost all Nations; but the *Canons* of our Church dare not venture that, but positively require the Consent of Parents: They [101] tell us, *That it is not lawful for any Children* (unless arrived to the Age of 21) *to make any Marriage-Contract, without the Consent of their Parents; or, in Case they are dead, of their Guardians and Governors*. And that is one good End she proposes in Publishing the *Banns* of Matrimony, that the Parents and People concerned may know, whether they think fit to agree to their Children's Choice or no. And, that this End may not be defeated by the Secrecy of Licences, it is required, *that one of the Parties should depose on Oath, that Consent of the Parents is not wanting*, before they can obtain the Licence. This Care our Church takes, though much in vain; which sufficiently shews her Opinion of the Matter, how far she reckons the Consent of Parents necessary.



But to all this, it is but reasonable to hear and consider what may be answered by the Children. Marriage is certainly a State and Condition, upon which the Happiness or Misery of Life does very much depend; more than indeed most People think upon before-hand. To be confined to live with one perpetually, of whom we have no Liking and Esteem, must certainly be a most uneasy State: There had need be a great many good Qualities, to reconcile a constant Conversation to one, even where there is some share of Kindness and Affection; but, without *Love*, the very best of all good Qualities will never make a constant Conversation easy and delightful. And whence proceed those endless and innumerable Domestick Miseries, that plague and utterly confound so many Families, but from want of Love and Kindness in the Wife or Husband? From thence comes their Neglect, and careless Management of Affairs at Home, and their profuse extravagant Expences made Abroad. In a word, it is not easy, as it is not needful, to recount the Evils that arise, abundantly, from the want of Conjugal Affection only. And since this is so certain, a Man or Woman runs the most fearful Hazard that can be, who Marries without this Affection in themselves, and without good Assurance of it in the other. And since it is impossible for any one to love with another's Affections, but with their own, the Parents must consider this especially, how they engage their Children to Marry, where, at the least, a hopeful Prospect of this Love doth not appear; lest, whilst they are endeavouring to make their Children happy, they make them of all Creatures the most miserable; and make them irremediably so. If there be Reason, that young People should be left in any Thing to themselves, and to their own Liberty, it seems to be in the Choice of those, with whom they are to live and die; with whom they are to venture being happy or unhappy all their Days. It is, without doubt, in nothing so necessary as in Marriage. *Do you not know (saith one of old) that Marriages belong to us our selves, and must be matter of our Choice? Our Affections are our Masters, not our Servants; and you cannot with all your Power and Might, nor by your frequently reiterated Orders and Commands, cause me to Love or Hate where you shall fix; nor is it in my Power to Obey you if I would. Then is Marriage like to be lastingly happy, when both agree in Loving each the other: And therefore since I am to have a Wife, the Partner of my Bed, and of all the Joys and Sorrows that are likely to befall me, whilst I live; I must seek for one that I can like (I think) for ever.* I do not say, that this is all as reasonable as it should be, but there is Reason enough in it, to make the Parents very careful and considering, that they urge not their Authority too far, in constraining their Children to Marry, not only where there is no visible Aversion, but where there is great Likelihood that there will not be a good Agreement.

As for the Custom and the Practice of the *Jews*, and all the *Easterlings*, together with the *Greeks* and *Romans*, they do, indeed, sufficiently evidence the Power and Authority that Parents exercised in the Disposal of their Children; but they do not, for all that, shew the Reasonableness of such Authority; nor is it of the Law of Nature so to do. And besides, they had some of them Power of Life and Death, and did sometimes *expose*, and might, by Allowance, *sell* their Children into Slavery; which are Privileges that do not naturally or reasonably attend the Parental Authority and Relation: And therefore there is great Abatement to be made from all Arguments, that conclude only from Customs and Usages, though of wise and civilized People.

The *Roman* Law-givers, (saith a *Græcian*, *S. Empir*) have put the Children, in the Parents Power, in the same Capacity with Slaves; the Parents are the Masters of them, and all they have, till they are emancipated as Slaves are, which other People



People look upon as Tyrannical. The *Roman Laws* (says another, *Simplic. in Epiet.*) having regard, as well to the Natural Superiority of Parents, as to the Care and Pains the Parents take about their Children; and willing also that the Children should be subject to their Parents, without Exception; and trusting also, I believe, to their Natural Affection, gave them, not only Power to sell their Children, but also to put them to Death, if they saw fit. I see no Reason to think, that Parents are, by Nature, Masters of the Liberty and Life of the Children; and if the Laws of any Kingdom make them so, they had their Reasons probably for so doing, and ought to be obeyed: But there is no inferring that the Children of other Kingdoms, where no such Laws have Being, are obliged to the same Obedience: And therefore, though the Nations Abroad had absolutely the Command of their Children, so as to dispose of them in Marriage, how and where they pleased; yet is not their Example sufficient to justify a Parent in doing the like, any farther than the Thing is otherwise fit among us; and Children, with *us*, are not tied to such a strict Obedience, in this single Point, only because the Children of the *Jews*, or *Greeks*, or *Romans* might be.

And besides, Regard is to be had to the *Customs* of the Country. The *Jews*, as all the People of the *East*, speaking generally, did not suffer the Women to go Abroad as ours do; they went to visit a Relation, or a near Friend, and that sparingly, and mixed not with common Company; which, with the Modesty peculiar to that Sex, deprived them of the Opportunities of disposing of themselves; so that their Parents only must or could dispose of them; and when they were once Married, they kept very much at Home, and saw but little strange Company. The *Greeks* and *Romans* seem to have had more Liberty; but yet, as well as I can guess, not near so much as *ours* have. This, I take it, ought to make some little Difference; for if the Customs of a Country allow the Women Liberty to see, and to be seen of all, both before and after Marriage, they make it somewhat more reasonable for them to choose their Partners, with whom they are to live, not in Confinement, but at Liberty; that they may not afterwards dislike their Partners, nor be betrayed, by such their Liberty, into new Liking and Desires of those they never can obtain. And, for the *Sons* of these old People, there is yet more Reason, why they should be entirely at the Disposal of their Parents, than the Daughters; and that, because Marriage was not half so grievous to them, for they were allowed more Wives than one; and Divorces were cheap and easy; and they took great Liberties besides, with whom they could: And therefore if they liked not the Condition or Person of a Wife, they either wandred from her Bed, and took unlawful Courses, (which they might do, it was so common, without much Scandal or ill Fame) or else they quickly found occasion for Divorce. And therefore to be Married by their Parents, although against their Liking, and Consent, was no great Hardship; the Customs of the Nation, and the Licence of the Times, gave them a world of Liberty: And this made it much more reasonable for the *Sons* to be entirely at their Parents Disposal, than the *Daughters*.

But the Case of Christians is much otherwise; they have no Liberty allowed of any kind; Christ hath obliged them to love each other, and no other, even till Death: Each Christian Pair is now reduced to their original Standard, and are to be, as *Eve* and *Adam* were to each the other, faithful and kind, without so much as hope of changing. This makes it to be infinitely more the Interest and Concern of Christians, to look they Marry none but whom they love, and still intend to love, than of other People, whose Laws and Customs allowed them greater Liberties; And therefore it is not altogether fair, to urge the Instances and Examples of these sort of People too far in a Christian Kingdom; for they might much more



more reasonably (because more easily) submit to the Will and Commands of their Parents, than Christians in some Cases of Marriage can. And when Parents remember that their Commands are to lay Obligations on their Children, that will last when they themselves are dead and gone; and from which they never can be freed, though all the Evils in the World should happen to them; they will be cautious and sparing how they lay such Commands upon them, against their Inclination and Liking. However, there will always be some Difference betwixt Childrens refusing, with all Submission and Respect, to comply with the Commands of their Parents, in marrying such whom they are sure they do not love; and their marrying where they will, without the Consent, or against the Commands of their Parents. The Disobedience of the one is much more pardonable and pitiable than the Disobedience of the other; because it is much more in People's Power to keep themselves free from engaging their Affections, than it is to settle them where *other* People please: And to refuse to marry where commanded, is not so likely to do any Injury, or Dishonour, as to marry against Command, is to do both or either. And yet, in Excuse of such Disobedience, as marrying of themselves, Respect and Consideration are to be had to People's Age and Condition.

The Customs of the World, and Reason, consent in giving People still more Liberty, the older they grow: They are not to be Masters of themselves whilst young, because their Reason and Understanding are imperfect; they have not Judgment enough to consider what is good or evil for them; their Passions and Affections are strong and prevalent, and always looking towards Pleasure; and they have not Consideration enough to correct or check the Disorders of their Will, and Desires: And if these be the true Causes why they ought to be subject to the Will and Commands of Parents and Superiors, whilst young, it is but fit, that as these wear off, and Reason and Understanding, and Judgment succeed, their Chains should also wear away, and their Restraint be lessened, and they should grow up to full Liberty. This, we see, is generally allowed in *second* Marriages: The first does so emancipate and free the Children from the Father's Power, that it is not accounted Disobedience, when they marry the second Time without Consent. Now this is not, because the Parents are no longer Parents, nor the Children tied to dutiful Obedience; but because that greater Age and Reason make Folks fitter to consider themselves, and to look after their own Affairs. It is indeed a Maxim, That they, who are once emancipated and set free, do never return to Servitude; and therefore the Children, being once freed from their Parents Authority by Marriage, come not again under their Power, as to a second Marriage: But, I believe, that Fullness of Age, Maturity of Judgment, Sobriety and Staidness of Mind and Temper, are better Reasons for Children's Liberty, and Exemption from some Commands of their Parents, than their being once married: For if a *Minor* marry disobediently, and be afterwards set at liberty by his Partner's Death, whilst he is still young and under Age, whatever the Laws may do, yet Reason certainly subjects him to his Parents Power, in the Choice of a second Wife, as it did of the first: He is not emancipated by his first Folly and Disobedience, he still wants the Care and Tutelage of his Parents; so that it is, at the Bottom, Age, and Discretion, and Ability to look after themselves, which do exempt the Children from the Subjection of their Parents in Matters that are so *personal*, and so much the Childrens own Concern and Interest. And therefore Parents are especially to have regard to the Age and Wisdom of their Children; and the Childrens Disobedience, in these Cases, will be more or less excusable, as Age and Wisdom set them more at Liberty.

And sometimes it will so happen, that the Childrens marrying themselves, will be in some Measure excusable by the Parents Neglect and Backwardness of taking such



such Case, as is but necessary in many of those Cases; and therefore some Laws have left the Children wholly at their Liberty to marry at such an Age, if their Parents looked not after it before. These, and many other Things, may be said in Behalf of Children, either refusing to marry such as their Parents command them to marry, or that Marry according to their own liking against Command. And there is so much to be said on both Sides, and so many Things to be considered particularly on each, that it is neither safe, nor true, to affirm, that all Parents, in all Cases, have a Right to the Compliance and Obedience of their Children; or that all Children are at Liberty to marry and dispose of themselves, without their Parents; for neither of these Propositions are unexceptionably true. Parents have a greater Power; but they must use it, (as truly most generally they will, and do) like Parents, *i. e.* tenderly and kindly: And Children have a great Duty; but they are not tied like Slaves in all Cases, and with Bonds that will last for ever: But when they do not obey, they must do it with Unwillingness, and great Reluctance; and it must be in Cases of great and lasting Moment and Concern, and such, as, when represented to fair and equal, wise and understanding People, they may find themselves both pitied for their Trial, and approved for their Resolution: That those, who would be glad that Children should obey their Parents, may see it reasonable they should *not* be obeyed in these Particulars; for to say what the Truth is, the Affections of Parents are generally so strong, and their Intentions so good towards their Children, that the Presumption of *Right* is generally on their Side; and the Cause of the Children had need be very just and righteous, and apparently reasonable and good, when they dispute or contend with Parents; because the Bias of the whole World is, with much Reason, on their Side against the Children.

The Sum of what has been said, amounts, I think, to this: When the certain Laws of God, and the Laws of the Land, and of our Superiours, lay their Commands or Prohibitions on them, the Parents have nothing to do but to forward the Obedience of their Children; they are not to injoin them any thing prejudicial to the Obligations they lie under to God and to their Country, nor to command them in Opposition to them: And when they do, they are not to be heard or understood; the Children are to go on steadily in their Duty to both, and to *mistake* their Parents Orders, with Submission and Respect, and Tenderness. And in the Case of Marriages, the Parents are to take all due Care, to see their Children well disposed of, according to their Age and Quality, and Tempers; remembering they are then laying the Grounds and Foundation of their Happiness or Misery; and not to let the Consideration of Fortune and Estate so preponderate and over-weigh all other Considerations of Form and Favour, Birth and Education, Virtue and good Qualities, as to neglect them all: And when the Parents have done this, the Children are to obey as far as possibly they can; the little Objections of the Fancy, and the Niceties that are commonly made on these Occasions, must yield to the mature Deliberations of the Parents. It were best, and most to be wished undoubtedly, that both the Parents and the Children might choose, *i. e.* that each should approve the other's Choice: And that, as *Homer* says of *Penelope*, she might be bestowed by her *Father*, upon whom *she* pleased, for otherwise they will not both be easy: And when that comes to pass, the Authority of Parents, and the Duty of Children, are both secured and reconciled.

But if this will not be, there will go near to be some Fault on one Side: If the Parent offer what the Child cannot possibly assent to, and what the Neighbourhood, and wise and unconcerned Persons blame, condemn and reject, upon a competent and reasonable Information of the whole Proceedings; if such Refusal of the Offer be made with Decency, and great Humility, upon the Childrens Part,



it will not fall under the Head of Sinful Disobedience: They may stand off with Innocence and Safety, and yet may *Honour*, as they ought, *their Father and their Mother*. But if such Offer be made by the Parents, as a wise and good Man, in the like Case and Circumstances, may make, without Folly and without Injury; and there be nothing handsome or material to object, and such as would satisfy a wise and sober, and impartial Man; the Duty of Children so refusing will not be Safe; they must, for ought I see, obey their Parents in these Cases. And if Children, who are under Age, and wholly in their Father's Custody and Power, and Part of his House and Family, will venture to engage themselves, without the Consent, or against the Commands of their Parents, to their Dishonour, or their Prejudice, they will be guilty of sinful Disobedience, and must seek the Forgiveness they will want, both at God's, and their Parents Hands. How far Obedience in these Cases is also due to the *Mothers*, by virtue of this Commandment, both whilst the Father lives, and afterwards; I intend, if it please God, to shew, with other Particulars, in the following Discourse.

## DISCOURSE III.

EXOD. XX. VERSE 12.

### *Duty of Children to Parents.*

HAVING shewn the Necessity there is, That Children should be obedient *to*, and governed by their Parents, in all Things, where they are at Liberty by the Laws of God, and of their Country, and in common Sense and Reason ought to be at Liberty; I am, before I leave this Head, to speak a little to the Authority of *Mothers*, and to the Obedience that is due to them, both whilst the Fathers are alive, and after they are dead. The Scriptures make no manner of Difference betwixt the Obedience, Fear or Honour, due to Parents; the *Mother* is still included, still expressed, with the Father: *Honour thy Father and Mother*. *He that smiteth his Father or Mother, shall surely be put to Death*, Exod. xxi. 15. *He that curseth his Father or Mother, shall surely be put to Death*, Verse 17. *Ye shall fear every Man his Mother and Father*. *If a Man hath a rebellious Son, which will not obey the Voice of his Father, or the Voice of his Mother, then shall his Father and his Mother lay hold on him, and say, This our Son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our Voice*, Deut. xxi. 18. And, *Cursed be he that setteth light by his Father or his Mother*, xxviii. 16. And, *My Son, hear the Instructions of thy Father, and forsake not the Law of thy Mother*: And so in many other Places, where the same Duty is required to be paid the Mother with the Father; and, in Truth, there is equal Reason in most Cases, why we should do so, and in some, greater. The Mothers undergo most Pain and Sorrow for them, bear all the Trouble of their Infancy and Childhood, do all they can for them, and intend them much more; have at the least the same, but generally a much greater Affection to them, and the same Interest and Concern for their Good and Welfare. And therefore, in Nature, and true Reason and Gratitude, the Children are obliged to make no Difference betwixt the Father and Mother, in their Observance and Obedience of, and to them.

But



But because the Father is also superior to the Mother, both in Natural Strength, in Wisdom, and by God's Appointment; and that there is no obeying contrary Commands; therefore the Children are especially to obey the Fathers, in Cases where they have Power to command, and where they cannot obey both Parents together: They must never obey one Parent to the Prejudice of the other: The Father has no right to command the Children any thing undutiful, disrespectful, or injurious to the Mother; but if it happen that the Inclinations or Desires of Mothers should differ from those of the Fathers, in the Choice of Trade, or Calling, or in Matches for the Children, or other things of Moment; so that the Children must displease one Parent by complying with the other; the Father is the superior Authority, and must be obeyed; because both the Laws of God and Man have subjected the Wife to the Husband: She is not presumed to have a *Will* contrary to her Husband's; and therefore the Child disobeys not his Mother, who obeys his Father's Command, because the Mother is to be obedient also: And the Case is not very much altered, although the Father do not lay express Command upon the Child; but is passive and content, likes and approves the Choice he makes, although the Mother be wholly averse to it: In such a Case the Father is to be regarded, for he is the proper Superiour.

But when the Mother is the *only* Parent, then her Authority increases, and she is then solely to be regarded: But the Civil Laws do generally free the Sons at such an Age, supposing them the Masters of the Family; and, by the Advantage of their Sex and Education, fit to govern, and dispose of themselves and their Affairs. The Daughters are, indeed, kept longer in Subjection, supposed to want the Care and Wisdom of the Parents longer; but growing up to liberty, as they advance in Years and Understanding. There can, indeed, be no exact Rules in any such Cases; for the Wisdom of either Parent, or Children, must necessarily make some Alteration in the measures of Obedience, in respect to some Commands which relate so nearly to the Children, as Marriage especially does.

And even in Cases where the Sons and Daughters may be reasonably presumed at Liberty, and would otherwise take and use that Liberty; yet, unless it be a Matter of great Moment, it should not easily be ventured on, to the Mother's great Sorrow; for the Grief of Parents is not to be occasioned cheaply and lightly; much will be suffered by a dutiful good-natured Child, before he will afflict and grieve his Parent: And since this is, especially the Infirmary and Feebleness of Mothers, the Children are obliged to greater Care and Circumspection in their Behaviour towards them, to prevent their Sorrows; for every thing that gives them Grief, is a sort of Disobedience. I will end this whole Matter with forewarning Children of what will certainly come to pass; and that is, that they will never be able to remember any Act of Disobedience to their Parents, without much Trouble and Remorse, without great Sorrow and Concern of Mind: It will dwell continually upon them, and haunt them like an Evil Spirit; they will wish a thousand times, they had behaved themselves more dutifully, kindly, and obediently; and rather gone without their Desires, than have occasioned any Trouble or Sorrow to their Parents.

The last thing that Children owe their Parents, is *Support* and *Sustenance*; and this is evidently comprehended under the word *Honour*. God commanded, (saith our Saviour, *Matth. xv. 4.*) saying, *Honour thy Father and Mother; and he that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the Death.* But ye say, *Whosoever shall say to his Father or Mother, it is Corban, i. e. a Gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and Honour not his Father and his Mother, he shall be free.* And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his Father or his Mother, as it is in *St. Mark vii. 12.* God commanded



manded the *Jews* to honour their Parents: But the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, by their Tradition, had sometimes made the Command of no Effect, by teaching the People, that if once they had devoted their Estate to God's Service, or to the Service of the Temple, either to purchase Wood, or Frankincense, or Doves, or any thing used about the Altar, if they had consecrated their Estate to Holy Uses, they were thereby discharged from succouring their Parents, when they came to stand in need; so that if either Father or Mother came to want their very Bread and daily Sustenance, the Children might refuse it them, and say—No, it is *Corban*; that, by which thou mightest have been profited by me, is a Gift: The Estate, wherewith I might have succoured and supported you, is *Corban*, it is devoted to the Service of God and his Temple; and I may not sacrilegiously take away ought devoted to Holy Uses, to feed my Parents: And thus, saith Christ, you make void a certain Command of God, by a Tradition of your own, and set the Children free from honouring their Parents: Which he expresses in *St. Mark*, *Thus ye suffer them not to do ought for their Father and Mother*. From whence it appears very plainly, that to *Honour Parents*, comprehends the succouring and supporting them, under their Burthens and Necessities; and that this *fifth* Commandment certainly enjoyns the doing so to all Children. So the word *Honour* is taken in the *1 Tim.* v. 3, and 17 *Verses*. *Honour Widows, that are Widows indeed*; i. e. Let the Widows, who are in want, and behave themselves soberly and discreetly, and chastly, be relieved and maintained amongst you. And let the *Elders, that rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine*. Let the Ministers, that perform their Duties well and wisely, as they should, be accounted worthy of a Maintenance better than ordinary: Not that the *Jews* were at all inclined to be unnatural to their Parents, or to deny them what they wanted; but that such a Doctrine might constrain them to be so, if believed: And our Saviour's Discourse is particularly directed against the corrupt Glosses and the false Traditions of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.

The *Jews* were remarkably kind and tender to their Parents in Distress. It was a common saying with them, *you must Honour God with your Substance, if you have it; but you must Honour your Parents, whether you have it or no, for you must beg for them: And more than that, you must work, though it were in the publick Houses of Correction, to help your Parents*. This, I believe, was the Foundation of the Parents Power to sell their Children; it must be, either when they knew they could not be maintained but by such Sale, or when they could not themselves maintain their Children; and therefore sold them, that they might live. The Practice is too barbarous and unnatural, to be supported by any other Ground, or Reason; nothing but such extream Necessity could make it tolerable: Such a Power is not then strictly Just; but the Exercise of it is excusable, because it is unavoidable.

But all these Things are determinable by the Civil Laws of Nations; and therefore they differ in several Countries: But all agree in exacting and commanding the Relief and Sustenance of Parents. *We must Honour our Parents exceedingly*, saith Hierocles, *affording them the Service of our Bodies, and the use of our Wealth most chearfully*. And amongst the *Romans*, if a Son were quite emancipated and free from his Father's Government; yet if his Father came to want, and were denied Relief by his Son, the Son, for his Ingratitude, was to return again into his Father's Service, and never to be freed again. By *Solon's* Law, the Son indeed might deny this Aliment and Sustenance to his Father, in case his Father had neglected so to educate the Son, as to have put him in a way of making such Provision for his indigent Parent: If he had neither put him out to any Trade, nor taught him how to get his Living, it was presumed the Father had in a Manner exposed him to



to Misery ; and therefore deserved not the Return of Love and Kindness he had never shewn. But this was only to constrain the Parent to look after the Education of his Children, to make them thereby the more useful Members of the Commonwealth : It exempted the Children from the legal Penalties that otherwise might be inflicted on such unnatural Refusal ; but it took not away the Obligation the Children had, by Nature, to provide for their distressed Parents. Even this severe Law tied not the Children to be cruel and undutiful ; but intended to punish the Parents Folly and Neglect, by leaving it to the Children to deal with their Parents as they pleased, which otherwise they might not do, but were obliged to provide for them. For this Support and Maintenance of Parents, is a Thing so naturally and necessarily due, that no Laws can tie the Children not to afford it, according to their best Abilities. It would be due even to a Traitor, and proscribed ; that is, bare Sustenance would be due from Children to their Parents, in such hard Cases.

These are the Duties Children owe their Parents ; *Love, Respect* or *Honour, Obedience* and *Support* of all Kinds, whenever they stand in need of it ; and all of them comprehended under *Honouring* them, all of them enjoined to Children in this Command—*Honour thy Father and thy Mother.*

But because the Case of *going to Law with Parents*, is what does sometimes happen, and yet would not properly fall under any of the forementioned Heads, and yet deserves to be considered, it may not be unseasonable to speak a little to it, before I go on to the Promise and Encouragement annexed by God, to the Honouring of our Father and Mother.

If therefore the Inquiry be, Whether it be lawful at any Time, *for any Cause*, for Children to call their Parents into question before the Civil Magistrate or Judge : It is to be answered *affirmatively* ; but with many Restrictions. It is certain that Parents have a great Authority, but it is as certain that they may abuse it : They are not incapable of *doing* Injury. It is also certain, that Children are to be very *subject* to their Parents ; but as sure also, that they are not *Slaves*, but may *receive* Injury. And whoever can suffer wrong, may also be righted : The Laws of God do no where forbid this ; and the Laws of the Land are free and impartial ; they make no Difference of Persons, and know no Relation ; Justice is, in this Respect, to be blind : And therefore it is certain, that, in some Cases, a Son or Daughter may, without Offence of God's Law, appeal to the Laws of the Land, against their Parents.

In case of *Alimony*, if the Parent be so unnatural as to deny the Child its Food and Rayment, the Remedy at Law may be justly implored ; and no one would charge, with undutiful and disobedient Carriage, a Child that should implore Assistance in such Case. So if a Parent should so cruelly use a Child as to dismember it, or make it lame, or do it any other lasting Mischief, the Child might very justly make the Case known to the Magistrate, and beg his Favour and Assistance. In these, and such like Cases, the common Sense and Pity of Mankind would teach us, that such Complaint were not a Breach of Childrens Duty to Parents, but very consistent with it. And yet this is one Way of Childrens going to Law with their Parents. But here, the Occasion must be, we see, exceeding great and pressing, and visibly, to wise impartial People, reasonable and just. It is not allowed to make even these Complaints, upon any slight Mischief ; it must be sharp, and very near intolerable, before the Children must appeal to Magistrates : For though there are no positive Laws ; yet Reason, Custom, and Consent of People, give such Power of Castigation and Correction to Parents, that the Laws forbid to any one besides ; presuming always, that the Occasion will be very just, and the Provocation very great, when the Parents proceed to much Severity ; the Laws still trust, as well they



they may, a great deal to the Parental Kindness and Affection: And yet they see sometimes, that there is need of interposing their Authority, and hindring Passion from proceeding to Extremities. And, in all such Cases, the Children are to ask for nothing but Relief and Ease to themselves; no Hardship, Penalty or Punishment, is to be sought for, to the Parent, by them; that would be impious Cruelty indeed: No Thought of Revenge must come into their Minds: They will be miserable enough in having such Parents as will provoke them to fly from *them*, for Succour, to a *Stranger*, without the Trouble and Uneasiness of seeing them miserable, and suffering any Evil.

And as for Matters of Contract, Estate, Inheritance, or Money, it must not be for any small Matter, nor for a light Injury, nor any Thing easy to be born, that a Child can implead his Parent; the Hardship must be near intolerable; the Injustice great and pressing, when a wise indifferent Man, or a Man's own Conscience can permit him to go to Law with his Father or Mother. We are obliged, as Christians, to bear *somewhat* at every one's Hands, and little Injuries are the least we can forgive to one another. And common Sense and Reason will tell one, he is certainly obliged to bear more from a Parent, than from any other: And therefore the Provocation and Necessity must be exceeding great and violent, when it is not to be passed over with Patience and Submission by the Children. It should therefore be plain and visible to all considering People, that the Parent is very much in the Wrong, doing a manifest Injustice, violating the Laws of Nature, and putting off the Parental Love and Tenderness, before a Child should publicly contest at Law: The Neighbourhood, and World around, should be convinced of the Parents Iniquity, and see the Injury intended, or done, to be intolerable, and see withal the Necessity of seeking Redress at the Hands of publick Justice, before the Children do it. Publick Fame should go before, and prepare the Minds and Ears of all that shall hear it; so that every one should pity the Childrens Case, in having to deal with so injurious Parents, and be concerned to wish them Success: By all which I mean to say, that the Justice of the Childrens Cause must be notorious, and the Injury done them manifestly great, and grievous to them, before they are permitted, by their Duty, Decency, and Religion, to go to Law with their Parents.

The Duty, indeed, is somewhat altered in the Case of Mothers, when they hasten to second Marriages, apparently prejudicial to their Children. The Necessity of going to Law with *them*, is more frequent and more urgent than with Fathers, or with Mothers still continuing in the State of Widowhood; because they seem to have translated their Affection and Interest to another Family; and most of the Comforts and Conveniencies arising from such contested Money or Estate, go to *strange* People, to whom the Children have no Obligation: And therefore that Piety in Children, that would permit the Mother to enjoy, in Peace and Quiet, what was perhaps in Justice none of her's, need not sometimes be scrupulous of recovering it from her, since she herself would have the least Advantage by it; but it would go to utter Strangers.

While she continues in a State of Widowhood, she is their Mother still, and they are all of one Piece and Family; she is presumed to intend nothing but their Advantage, and all she has is looked upon as theirs: And therefore if she, through covetous Desire, or through Mistake, or Peevishness, will needs retain what does not properly belong to her, the Children, if it can consist with their Welfare by any Means, will be content to bear with so much Loss, or Disappointment, for the Present, since it will certainly be theirs at last, rather than give their Parent an unnecessary Grief and Trouble, by going to Law. But when a new Affection, and a new Engagement intervene, then all the Prospect is disturbed: They see  
new



new Interests rising, and the new Wife is supposed to make herself as acceptable as she can to her new Choice, by bearing with her all the Advantages of Fortune she can get together; and in such Cases does, too oft, forget her Children, and her former Love. In this Case the Children are much more at Liberty to pursue their just Rights, than otherwise they would be; because, as I said, the Advantages of forbearing would not accrue so much to the Parent, as to an utter Stranger, to whom the Children have little or no Obligation.

And yet, in this Case, the Children must consider well, and take good Care, that they be not overbiaſſed by this common Prejudice, That *ſecond Marriages are always prejudicial to the Childrens Rights and Interests*; for it is not always ſo, though it is too often: And therefore the Injury muſt be great and ſure, as before, that will juſtify the Children in their contending with their Mother, though ſhe has now forgot their Father's Houſe and Family. But both in this, and all other Caſes, when the Reaſon is great and manifeſt, and the Occaſion juſt and unavoidable, the Suit is to be managed with all the Care and Tenderneſs imaginable. Conteſts at Law are very ſeldom managed with ordinary and common Charity; they are full of Reproach, and full of Scandal: Few People think of any thing but vexing and afflicting their Adverſaries; and therefore have their Eyes and Ears continually open to the Faults and Aſperſions of their Enemies, glad to hear them repreſented ill, and willing to believe them ſo; as if they were themſelves advantaged by it. They are perpetually contriving and inventing how to leſſen one another, and gain to themſelves Credit, at the other's Expence: This makes the Law very hazardous, few People go out ſo innocent as they enter; they begin with Deſire of *Juſtice*, and end with a Deſire of *Miſchief*: They begin with Calmneſs, and a tender Regard to their Adverſary; but proceed with Anger, and increaſe to Malice, and end, too often, with impatient Longings for Revenge. Thus it is moſt commonly, when People, that are Strangers, or little known to each the other, go to Law together. One would hope that it ſhould not be ſo with Friends and Relations; but that their natural Ties of Love ſhould lay Reſtraint upon their Paſſions, and keep them in better Order. But it is rather all the contrary; they try at firſt, it may be, to moderate and keep themſelves in good Temper; but they quickly fly out into Exceſs, recriminate, complain of, and reproach each other, with more Sharpneſs and Ill-will, than other People; and, knowing more of each other, they are apt to proclaim more Secrets, and conſequently meet with much more Credit and Belief, and conſequently do each other much more Miſchief. And it is ſtill worſe, the nearer theſe Relations are to each the other; when *Children* and their *Parents* ſtrive, there is a world of Danger of ill Conſequences.

It muſt needs be uneaſy to the Parents, to be ſuſpected of Injuſtice, and ill Deſign againſt their own Children, and to be charged in Publick of being ſo: And it muſt needs be uneaſy to the Child, to think of ſtriving with the Parent, and to believe the Parent ill-intentioned towards him: But this Contention does too frequently betray the Child into unkind, undutiſul, and hard Expreſſions; and oftentimes the Parent to angry Curſes, and fearful Imprecations, which both good Children, and good Parents, would by all means avoid. The Fear of Injury, and Hope of Victory, do ſo exaſperate Peoples Minds, that it is the Senſe of theſe ill Conſequences makes the going to Law of Children with their Parents ſo affrightful: And makes it ſo much more eligible to endure a great Hardſhip, and conſiderable Injury, than ſeek for Remedy at Law, to the hazarding ſo much Miſchief as does frequently enſue in ſuch unkind Contentions. What Joy of Victory can be to either Side, when *they* muſt be aſhamed, confounded, and, it may be, much prejudiced, whom we are tied, of all Folks living, to honour moſt, and do the beſt Service to.

But



But after all, let one be never so much inclined to favour, and secure the Rights and the Respects of Parents, as Nature, Reason, Decency, the Laws of God and Man require; yet when the Parents put off natural Affection, and have no regard to Honesty and Justice; but follow blindly and perversely their own Humour, and will not be advised by wise and sober, and impartial People, to do that Right to Children which both the Laws of God and Man require, and call for at their Hands; no one can reasonably condemn the Children that implore the Assistance of the Laws and Magistrates, to get themselves redressed: Provided they do it by Necessity, with Tenderness, and all the Respect and Honour possible, never aggravating any thing done, any farther than there is need to their own Vindication; of which they must not yet be over-tender, to the Disparagement and great Blame of their Parents: They ought to be exceeding careful to conceal the Faults and the Miscalriages of them. I do not see, but the same Piety would have endeavoured to cover *Noah's Cruelty*, or *Injustice*, or *Perverseness*, had he been guilty of them, that was so careful to conceal his *Nakedness* and Folly, for they are also the Shame and Nakedness of the Understanding; and such Infirmities of the Mind no less dishonourable than those of the Body, which no one likes to discover in their Parents and Relations.

It remains, in the last place, that I consider the Promise and Encouragement annexed to the Performance of this Commandment: *Honour thy Father and Mother, that thy Days may be long in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. It is certain, that *the Land* here mentioned was *Canaan*; and therefore, that this Promise was particularly made to the Children of *Israel*. And it is also certain, that this Promise of *long Life* was also made to them upon the Fulfilling the rest of God's Commands, as well as this; the Book of *Deuteronomy* is full of this Promise: See, saith God, xxx. 16. *I have set before thee this Day, Life and Good, Death and Evil: In that I command thee this Day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, and his Judgments, and his Statutes, that thou mayst live and multiply; and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the Land, whither thou goest to possess it*. So in xxxii. 47. *Set your Hearts unto all the Words which I testify among you this Day, which ye shall command your Children to observe, to do all the Words of this Law: For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your Life: And, through this thing, you shall prolong your Days in the Land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it*: And so in iv. 40. v. 33, *Ye shall walk in all the Ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your Days in the Land which ye shall possess*. So in vi. 2. xi. 9. xxv. 15. and other Places; and so long Life is promised to a King that governeth well, in *Deut.* xvii. 20. and in xxii. 7. *But thou shalt in any wise let the Dam go, and take the Young to thee, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy Days*. And so, short Life is threatened to *Idolatry* in *Deut.* iv. 26. and xxx. 18. From all which Places it appears, that *long Life* is as well promised to the Performance of other Commands of God, as to this of honouring Parents: But it also appears, that by long Life is not strictly meant the living a great many Years, but the *living happily* and well: Long Life is accounted a Blessing, and therefore it is put to signify a Blessing in the Scriptures; and in all these Places, it is as if God had said; If you will live happily, and in my Love and Favour, in the Land to which you are now going, observe my Statutes, and keep my Commandments: That will secure to you all the Blessings you expect, and I have promised to you, in the Land of *Canaan*; whilst you do so, you shall continue Masters of your Enemies, and live in Peace and Plenty. But if you fall from your Duty and Obedience, then I will give you over into the Hands of your Enemies, and you shall no longer live in,



in, and enjoy this good Land, but be delivered over to Captivity : *I denounce unto you this Day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your Days upon the Land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it :* Deut. xxx. 18. The Jews themselves understand it no otherwise than of being in general *blessed*; and where God saw convenient, he blessed them with long Life in particular: For long Life is, of itself, no Blessing at all; and short Life is generally no Evil, but a Deliverance from much Evil. And the short Life of Children is not so much a Punishment to *them*, as to their Parents; and therefore for Children to be cut off, untimely, for their Disobedience to their Parents, were to afflict the miserable Parents doubly; to cause them to lose their Children, and to lose them in Disobedience.

Such Punishment would indeed be very proper for the Parent, by whose Want of careful, virtuous, and religious Education, the Child should become rebellious and disobedient; for then he would bear the Punishment of his own Fault; he would then smart for his Folly, or his Neglect; and be afflicted, first, by a Disobedience, and then by an immature Death, its Consequence; both which he might and ought to have prevented. But, truly, when a Parent has been very careful to educate his Children well, and yet shall find them disobedient and rebellious, and love them notwithstanding tenderly; for such a Parent to lose these Children, would look like a Hardship, and none alive but would conclude the *Parent* were rather punished than the *Children*; for though old Age may be a Blessing, when attended with other Blessings; yet certainly for People to die young, can be no Punishment to them, because they feel no farther Misery; Death puts an End to all their Sufferings.

And as for the Pleasures of this Life, from which they are cut off by Death; they, who live to enjoy them, know the Dead have lost nothing; for (besides, that it is no Pain to lose what they never had) the Pleasures of this Life are, at the best, but just enough to sweeten Life, and make it tolerable: Life were not worth the living without them; but they who live not, do not want them: And if it were not for the Comfort, and the Benefit of Relations, and the doing Good in the World, a short Life were a great Blessing. The Instance, that is commonly brought to prove the Heathens also were of the Mind, that short Life was a Punishment of disobedient Children, is that of *Simoisus* in *Homer*, who died very young, because he was Disobedient, and would not support his Parents. But this Instance is much mistaken; for there *Simoisus* is lamented as one that died exceeding young, and lived not to make the Returns of good Children to their Parents, for all their Care and Tenderness bestowed upon him. He made not Returns answerable to his dear Parents; for he died very young, and was disabled by Death from doing what he would otherwise have done, if he had lived. It is a common Instance, and therefore I choose to disprove it, because the Heathens were not likely to make any such Judgment of the immature Deaths of disobedient Children, any otherwise than by reckoning immature Deaths among the Misfortunes that befel Mankind, and a Token of the Divine Displeasure; but, though due enough, yet no more due to *that* Crime than any *other*: And therefore, when St. Paul applies this Commandment, with this Promise of long Life, to the Christians, in *Eph. vi. 2, & 3.* he ought to be understood in general of *being blessed by God*, some way or other: *Honour thy Father and Mother, which is the first Commandment with Promise; i. e.* the first Commandment of the second Table, and hath a Promise annexed to it; Or the first Commandment with a special Promise, (for the second Commandment hath a Promise and a Threatning too, annexed to it, in the general) *that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the Earth.* His Design is certainly to encourage Children to honour and obey their Parents, and he repeats the Encourage-



ment God gave the Children of *Israel*; but he could not repeat it wholly in the Sense they took it in, because Christians have nothing to do with *Canaan*: But it must have another Sense equivalent, and that is, *that it may be well with thee*, and thou mayest live happily, and in God's Favour, and he may bless thee with the Blessings thou shalt most stand in need of, and will be best for thee; and, if that be best for thee, *that thou mayest live long on the Earth*.

We cannot therefore conclude, from the Promise annexed to this Commandment, that long Life will *certainly* follow upon the Children's Obedience to their Parents: We must not understand that particular Blessing to be certainly and universally fixed to good Children: Every Day's Experience may convince us of the contrary; for we see the most obedient, dutiful, and most respectful Children, carried off by hasty and untimely Ends, and such as gave the greatest Hopes imaginable. Neither yet may we conclude, that long Life is not sometimes bestowed upon obedient Children, for it sometimes may be; it is not fixed, but it is not, to be sure, excluded. Neither can we any ways conclude, that they, who arrive to old Age, have therefore been obedient Children; for that is not likely to be true; Experience is against it in too many Instances; *there is a Sinner of an hundred Years old*: And therefore, from these Uncertainties, there can be no concluding with any Safety.

The Encouragements that Children have from this Commandment, and its Promise, are, That if long Life be most convenient for them, all their Case and Circumstances considered, they may expect it; but if it will not prove a Blessing, (as truly of itself it never will) then is not God unfaithful in this Promise, if he take to himself, betimes, the best and most obedient Children; for he only promised what would prove a Blessing, when he promised long Life; and the *Righteous are sometimes taken away from the Evil to come*; and then, to be sure, in Love and Kindness; and therefore long Life is not always a Blessing, and therefore is not always promised, for God designs to bless obedient Children. He will hear the Prayers of their Parents; he will confirm their Blessings: He will sometimes bless them by extraordinary Means and Methods; and oftner by ordinary, by blessing their Care and Labour, promoting their Industry, giving them Favour in the Sight of such as shall be able to do them Service: He will cause their dutiful and good Behaviour to their Parents, to stand them in good stead; and recommend them to the good Opinion of others; there being indeed nothing that generally makes more acceptable to all Sorts of People, than such obedient Carriage. Nothing becomes the Rich and Noble better; nothing does sooner recommend the Poor and Mean to Favour and Employment, to Pity and Relief, than such Report of them, that they are good and helpful to their Parents in Distress. When the Son of *Syrach* exhorteth to be helpful to Parents, he tells the Children, they shall find their Accounts in so doing: *My Son, help thy Father in his Age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth; and if his Understanding fail, have Patience with him, and despise him not, when thou art in thy full Strength: For the relieving of thy Father shall not be forgotten; and instead of Sins, it shall be added to build thee up: In the Day of Affliction it shall be remembered*; iii. 12. It will undoubtedly be remembered for Good, both by God and all good People. God will not only bless obedient Children here, but he will bless them with the Blessings of another Country, of which the Land of *Canaan*, with all its Beauty and Fertility, was but a poor and empty Shadow; even with the Blessing of eternal Life in Heaven, where our short Span shall be prolonged to everlasting Ages, and where it shall be well for ever with us; where it will be our Pleasure and Reward to be perpetually loving, honouring, and obeying our eternal Parent, the great Creator and Preserver of us all: Whom let us all beseech, in the Words of the Church, *to have Mercy upon us, and to incline our Hearts to keep this Law*.

DISCOURSE



## DISCOURSE IV.

EPHESIANS VI. VERSE 4.

*And ye Fathers provoke not your Children to Wrath; but bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.*

HAVING already treated of the Duty of Children to their Parents, and considered some of the most proper Cases, in that Relation: I am now to speak a little to the Advice that St. Paul here gives to Parents, how to behave themselves towards their Children. He had spoken to Children in the Verse before, *Children obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right: Honour thy Father and Mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the Earth:* And then he applies himself to Parents, *And ye Fathers, &c.*

I take it for a Rule, and granted, that there is no Relation in the World, either natural or civil, and agreed upon, but there is a reciprocal Duty obliging each Party. There is no such thing as one Man's requiring Love, Respect, Honour, Service or Obedience, from another, without being, at the same time, obliged to do him some good Turn for it, or for having already done it. God is not indeed a Debtor to any Man, but the Thing at the Bottom is the same: It is for our Creation, Preservation, for all the Blessings of this Life, and for the Promises and Hopes of a better, that we owe him, and are called upon to pay him, Honour and Service, Praise and Thanksgiving. Without *those*, he would have no Right to *these*; we need not fear to say so. We should not praise him, but for the Good we have received; nor *pray* to him, but for the Good we expect to receive *from* him. Now though he does not antecedently owe these Favours and Blessings to Mankind, yet it is necessary that he do them, before any Obligation can be laid on Mankind, to pay him Prayer or Praise, Honour, Service or Thanksgiving. There is therefore nothing more certain than this, that as all Duties and Relations are at first founded upon Benefits hoped for, or already received; so no one can require any Thing, as a Duty, at another's Hands, without having obliged him, or intended to oblige him, by something answerable to what he asks. And therefore, though the Parental Relation may seem, of all others, to be most at Liberty; yet the Truth is this, that all the Right and Claim they have to the Love, Respect, the Service and Obedience of their Children, is founded on the Love they shew them, and the Good they do them, according to their Understanding and Ability: And therefore, if Parents, out of Cruelty or Wantonness, should expose their new-born Infants to the Rage of wild Beasts, or throw them into Rivers, and they should afterwards escape by good Providence, they might account those People for their Parents, if they would; and they might *pay* them, but they would not *owe* them, Love, or Honour, or Obedience: Their barbarous Usage cancelled the Bond of Nature, and left them under no other Obligation to their Parents, than to Strangers. No Body can assign a Reason why these Parents should require or expect any Duty at these Childrens Hands: For, as for the *Being* they may be said to give them, they took it away as soon, and cruelly, as they could.

I only mention this, to make it very evident, that the Obligation of Children to love, honour, respect, and obey their Parents, is founded originally upon the  
Parents



Parents Love and Care of *them*; and to shew, that no one can require any thing from another as a Duty, to whom he does not also *owe* something by way of Duty. This is necessarily to be premised, not only when we are considering the Duty of Parents to their Children, but to be kept in mind, in considering the Duties of all Relations else, whether natural or civil; for, in all Relations, each Party is mutually, though differently, obliged to each the other. As therefore Children are obliged to honour their Parents; so also are Parents obliged to look after, and take care of their Children. But because, in assigning several Reasons why Children are obliged to honour their Parents, in all the Senses of that Word, I found occasion to instance in most of the particular Cases, where Parents are obliged to shew their Love to, and to perform, indeed, their Duty to their Children; I am at Liberty to consider the Words of the Text only, which contain but one Part of the Behaviour of Parents towards their Children: And that is, *Not to provoke their Children to Wrath, but to bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.* We are therefore to see, *in the first Place*, what it is *to provoke Children to Wrath*; and *in the second*, why Parents should not do so; and, *lastly*, what is meant by *bringing them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.*

*First*, What it is for Parents *to provoke their Children to Wrath.* To *provoke any one to Wrath*, is commonly understood, to irritate and stir them up to Anger; whether the Provocation be just or needless, whether with Reason or without it. Now Parents are not here advised never to provoke their Children, or to stir them up to Anger; for that may not be in their Power to prevent, and sometimes they will unavoidably do it, whilst they discharge their Duty to them. It is said of *Adonijah* the Son of David, *that his Father had not displeased him at any Time, in saying, Why hast thou done so?* But this is no Example for other Parents, unless their Children so behave themselves as not to need Check or Reproof. *Solomon* was a great deal wiser than his Father; and he advises Parents never to regard the Cries, the Pain, or Grief of their Children, under their Punishments, when there was just Occasion, or when they were in danger of Mis-carriage. When Parents see their Children in hazard of falling into evil Courses, they are not to stand considering, whether what is proper to reclaim them, and prevent their Misery, will grieve or anger them, but to venture that, and do their Duty. They are to have regard to what they intend *should*, and what in likelihood will follow, and that is Amendment; and not to how it will be taken at their Hands. They may herein look up to God the Father of us all, *who chastens us for our Profit, that we may be Partakers of his Holiness.* And yet he understands and knows, *that no chastening for the Present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.* The Good of Children is what the Parent is to regard; and though the Method of procuring that, may stir up all the dark and wrathful Spirits that the Children have, yet it is not to be declined on that Account; the reasonable Hopes of its yielding the Fruit of Goodness and Amendment, afterwards, to them who are exercised thereby, will justify what they do. Such a Restraint, Reproof, Admonition or Correction, as is in Reason and all Probability likely and proper to procure the Amendment of Children, though it will certainly provoke them to all the Anger and Impatience possible, is not here advised to be forbore by Parents, when they are bid *not to provoke their Children to Wrath.* The Scripture, which commands such Courses to be taken in many Places, does not, in any, advise them to be forbore: And therefore the just Exercise of the Parental Power is not restrained by any Means, in these Words, for fear of making the Children a little uneasy.

But



But because there were some Parents in *St. Paul's* Time, as there are some in all Times, of a most hard, inhumane Temper; and others, who think they have, by Nature, Authority to say, and do, and use their Children, as they please, and thereupon are perfect Tyrants and Barbarians; and others, who think it always, and in all Cases, absolutely necessary to deal ruggedly and severely with their Children; because of these People, it neither was, nor is unnecessary to lay some such Command or Injunction in general on them, as this in the Text, *Fathers provoke not your Children to Wrath*: And then, the *provoking to Wrath*, signifies the provoking them by constant, hard, and evil Usage, to such a Degree of settled *Anger*, as will certainly end in *Hatred*.

The Parental Yoke is, naturally, of all others, the most light and easy: When God himself would express his Love and Tenderness to Mankind, he can do it no way, more feelingly, than by calling himself our *Father*, and letting us know he treats us as Parents do their Children: And when we would set out the Care and Tenderness of one Man to another, to the highest, we can go no farther than to say, *be used him as a Father would his Son*. And indeed, all Admonitions and Injunctions to Parents, to use their Children kindly, and with Gentleness, seem to be directed to a very small Part of Mankind: *St. Paul* spake these Words, *Fathers provoke not your Children to Wrath*, but to a very few. And I believe that we, who now and then use them on these Occasions, can apply them to very few also: No, the Bias of Nature is to the other way. But to those few, to whom they are applicable, it may be fit to say—Parents, shew not your selves too hard, austere, and rigorous to your Children: And that for these Reasons (which was the second Thing to be considered;) *First*, Because it is unnatural in itself; and, *Secondly*, because of the evil Consequences of such Usage.

*First*, Because it is unnatural in itself. It is not doing as other *People* do, nor, indeed, as most other *Creatures* do: It looks as if you did not belong to Mankind, not to feel the same Affections, and to shew the same Kindness, that other Parents do. It is manifest, that your Children are not as happy as their Fellows are; they are prejudiced by being descended from you, and do not partake of the common Lot of Kindness with other Children. And what Reason is there, that they should be more miserable than others, if it lie in your Power to make them as easy? A Man is bound to be as good and kind to all the World, as he well can; and it were a weak thing, to think he has more Authority and Liberty to deal ill with his Children, than with other People. For though a Man is allowed to do that with his Children, which he may not do to Strangers; yet that is upon Presumption always, that it will tend to the Children's Benefit, and for that Reason the Laws of God and Man have left the Children to the Parents, and will not punish them for doing that to *them*, which would be punished if done to *Strangers*: But neither of those Laws allow the Parents to do any thing, truly injurious to the Children; and Nature gives them no such Power: She only gives them Power to do them all the Good they can, and only allows them the Liberty of hurting them, and afflicting them for a Time, in order to their Good. And therefore, where a Parent's Conscience tells him, that the Affliction he is laying upon his Child, is neither designed, nor likely to do him any Good, it tells him he has no just Authority to do it; it tells him he is unnatural. And though no humane Laws must, or ought, indeed, to prevent or take Cognizance of such Severity (unless the Commonwealth be found to suffer by it) because they would thereby be in danger of hindring Parents of exercising a just Authority, on reasonable and necessary Occasions, over offending Children: Though the Laws, I say, must not take notice of these unnatural



tural Severities; yet the Man cannot choose but know, that he is cruelly injurious all the while, and usurps a Power which does not naturally belong to him.

A Parent therefore must take Care, that he mistake not the *Silence* of God's Word, nor the Liberty that Human Laws must unavoidably leave to Parents in the Management of their Children, nor his own severe and rugged Temper; that he mistake not these for the Power and Authority that Nature gives him; for he may be unnatural to his Children, though God's Word prescribe him no Rule how far he may proceed, and though Human Laws will allow what he does, and though his own Temper incline him naturally to cruel and inhumane Courses; a Parent may be unnatural for all these; and may be punished by our Common-Parent, for such unnatural and cruel Usage.

But *Secondly*, Parents are to be warned against too great and constant Severities, because of the evil Consequences of such Usage. *First*, it discourages Children strangely, and breaks their Spirits: they have no Heart to set about any thing; when they perceive that all they say, and all they do, is ill understood and ill taken, they have no Lift or Courage to go on. They find it is much the same, whether they endeavour to please, and do their Duty, or not; they still receive the same Treatment, and meet with the like unkind severe Usage. And therefore when St. Paul is giving the same Counsel to the *Colossians*, as here he does to the *Ephefians*, he subjoins this as a Reason—*Fathers provoke not your Children to Anger, lest they be discouraged*, iii. 21. lest the perpetual Faulting, and Reproving, and Correcting them, reduce them to an utter Despair of pleasing them; and thereupon they sink, and become heartless, and faint in *Spirit*, under their Oppression. *Oppression will make a wise Man mad*, as Solomon says; and constant Misery and Painfulness of Mind will break a tender and ingenuous Heart, though the Sufferings of the Body be not very great.

There is naturally a Desire in all Inferiours, to render themselves acceptable to their Superiours; and this is visible in young People most especially, with regard to their Parents: But this Alacrity and vigorous Desire dies by degrees, when they perceive all their Endeavours to that purpose fruitless; it is the Hope of Succeeding, that is the Life and Spring of all Attempts; and when that fails, Desire itself languishes. When young People do all they can to win the Affections of their Parents, and find them still morose, and sharp, austere, untractable, and never to be moved; it is but natural to think, they should be tired, disconsolate, and faint, and give up all Endeavours for the Future. This is one evil Consequence of a constantly severe and rugged Treatment of young People: But it seldom stops here; it produces very commonly a slavish and a disingenuous Fear of their Parents. They look upon them as their Tyrants, and dread them, as the Slaves do those that punish them; and, indeed, a severe and never-pleased Parent is no better than a little Tyrant, a constant Terror to his People. This puts the Children upon mean and disingenuous Shifts, to make their Peace, or to avoid his Sight; they are never easy, but at distance from him; and therefore fly him upon all Occasions. They can never please him with the Truth, and therefore try to do it with Lies and Tricks. But this kind of Fear is so near to *Hatred*, and does so naturally produce it, that I need not make them *two* Consequences of a constant ill Usage, for they are commonly but *one*. There is nothing more certain, than that those whom we constantly *fear*, we shall very easily learn to *bate*. Nothing but Love and Kindness beget Love; and nothing is more likely to beget Hate, than to be constantly ill used, because that looks so like the natural Fruit of Hatred.

It is not difficult, even for young People, to discern a Difference betwixt a sudden, transient, accidental Anger, and a continual settled Disposition to Severity; they



they can make Allowance for Fits, though they return lightly and frequently: But when Anger becomes habitual, and Parents are not provoked, but always ready to quarrel, and upbraid, and punish; then it is natural for the Children to despair of pleasing them, and to conclude they are the Objects of their Hatred and Aversion; and this will too, too naturally beget a Coldness and Neglect, mean Thoughts, evil Suspicions, Distrust, Disregard to their Commands, Contrivances to free themselves from them, and such Aversion as will quickly end in downright Hatred; for finding that *in* their Parents, and feeling that *from* them, which occasions them to hate *others*, it will be strange if it do not occasion them to hate *them*. When others use them ill, though they endeavour to deserve well at their Hands, and take all Opportunities to shew their Anger, and Dislike of them, and never let them scape either Blame or Punishment, with or without Reason, and lead them a Life vexatious and afflicting, and will not be appeased by all that they can do, they easily conclude, that these People hate them, and have taken such Prejudice against them, as nothing can remove: And since this is reasonable enough to conclude, in the Case of any one besides Parents, what is it that forbids Children to make such a Conclusion of their Parents also, but a Presumption in Nature, that Parents cannot hate their Children? But this is not sufficient, if it were true at the Bottom, as I doubt it is not; for if Parents could hate their Children, they could express their Hatred no otherwise than these People do; and till we can know Folks Hearts, we shall always judge of their Affections, by the Expressions of Words and Actions: And therefore unless the Children are convinced (as they will in some time be, for they have Reason and Understanding, and know when they do amiss, and when they are truly blameable) unless they are convinced that the Severities they undergo are designed for their Good and Amendment, and have a Tendency thereto, it will signify nothing to tell them, that they are not hated by their Parents; for it is all one by what Name you call it, or by what Title you distinguish it; a constant rugged and austere Usage, and an implacable Severity will always go for Hatred with them who feel the Burthen of it.

And though Children (by which I understand those of Years and Discretion, but under the Tutelage of their Parents) though Children, I say, will be the last, in whom this ill Usage begets Hatred, yet it will sure enough beget it in them at last; and that is a fearful Consequence of provoking Children to Wrath, both to the Parents, and the Children. A Man can hardly be easy under the known Ill-will of any Relation, or one he has much to do withal; but this Uneasiness grows up to Pain and great Trouble, when the Relation is very near: It is impossible for either Parents to hate their Children, or Children their Parents, or to think they are hated by each the other, without great Grief and Trouble; it sits so hard upon their Minds, that they are never quiet under it: If they are otherwise never so happy, yet the Remembrance of this Enmity interrupts their Content, and spoils all; *All this availeth me nothing, saith Haman to his Wife, recounting his Felicities, whilst I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate.* It is not what we have that makes us happy, if we think we want something besides; that, which a restless Envy, and unmeasurable Ambition spake by *him*, is spoken inwardly by Love or Grief, when near Relations quarrel with each other; all things besides afford no settled Peace or Pleasure, whilst that great Breach continues.

Even where the Mind of one Party (and that the injured and offended one) is satisfied with the Reasonableness and Justice of his being at Variance, and sees the Necessity there is of continuing his Displeasure, and that great Mischiefs would arise from a Compliance and Reconciliation (and such Cases may very well happen, and that between Parents and Children) yet is not the Mind at perfect quiet for  
all



all this; the Voice of Nature is louder than that of Reason, and strict Justice, and beats importunately at the Heart; and there will be no lasting Rest, till all is over, and a thorough Reconciliation bring back each Party to their natural Affections, and place them in the State they were at first, and always should be.

This sore and uneasy Condition the Mind is in, during a State of Enmity, should be one Motive to the keeping and preserving Love and Friendship betwixt Relations; and since the Hearts of Parents do so naturally incline to Children, and Love, they say, *descends*, it ought to move them to the greater Care, not to irritate them too far by a cruel Usage; that they put it not past the Power of Reconciliation; for when Hatred is once taken up, and begins to fix and settle in Peoples Minds, it is very hard to root it out again. One may sooner be convinced, that our Aversion to a Person is not so reasonable and well grounded as it should be, and that we carry our Resentment too far: One may sooner be convinced of this, than we can lay them down, and amend; we cannot get out of our Mistakes so soon, as we fell into them, nor so easily get free from bad Practice. When we have done, and persisted some while in doing, what we are afterwards convinced we had better have let alone, we are not yet at Liberty; there are more Things concur to keep us in a Way we are once engaged in, than at first to bring us to it. And therefore it is not good to provoke any one too far, and carry Matters to extremity; it makes it so much the harder to soften them again, and bring them to good Temper, and place them where you found them, though they may see the Reasons of coming back, and have a secret Desire of doing so: And, of all Enmities and Feuds, the fiercest and the most implacable are those of near Relations.

These are some of the evil Consequences of Parents *provoking their Children to Wrath*, that is, of using them so ill, unkindly and severely, as to make them lose all Patience, and fly out into Fury and Disorder, to loose the Bands of Duty and Submission, to become Refractory, hardened in Contumacy and Rebellion: The Experience People have themselves, and the Observations they may make from others, may furnish them with other Arguments to this purpose. I have the less Care and Concern to look after other Reasons; because it is very probable, that the Case is rare, and seldom happens; there being, in all likelihood, throughout the Christian World, *twenty* too fond and tender Parents, to one austere and over-rigorous one: And as many Children, in the like proportion, rather undone by Softness and Indulgence, than miscarry by Severity. *One need not look for Arguments, or fear the want of them, where Nature is on our Side*; but because St. Paul supposes some, and all Ages supply us with some Instances of brutal and unnatural People, after they have heard the Reasons why Parents should not deal so over-rigorously with their Children, it is fit they should hear what St. Paul advises, and how he would have them deal with them, and that is, *to bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; which is the last Thing to be considered.

*To bring Children up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, is, according to the Letter, to bring them up in the Christian Religion, to teach them their Duty, to learn them what they are to Believe, and what to Practise; to instruct them in the Knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ; to shew them in what Condition they are by Nature, and to what they are advanced by Grace; to how much Misery their being descended from so corrupt an Original had reduced them, and how their actual Sins endangered them yet farther, by exposing them to God's Wrath, and everlasting Death; and what Deliverance from them all was wrought by Christ our Lord, with all the rest of the Particulars of that most merciful mysterious Dispensation. All this is naturally comprehended under *the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; and no doubt but Parents are here advised to bring their Children



Children up in the Knowledge and Practice of the Christian Religion: And it is the greatest Testimony of their Love, that they can shew them, in so doing; the greatest Kindness they can do them, the greatest Blessing, and the best Inheritance they can bestow upon them. Without this, it is a little thing to say, that neither Wisdom, Riches, Honours, nor any thing besides, can make them happy; for without this, they will, with all the rest, be miserable.

Taking therefore the *bringing Children up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, for the breeding them up in the Knowledge of Christ and his Religion, the Connexion may be this. Would you, Parents, have your Children Honour you, and behave themselves obediently, and as becomes them in all Respects? bring them up in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord; teach them the Christian Law; let them read and be conversant in the Holy Scriptures; make them apply themselves early to that; there they will see their Duty; there they will find such Lessons of Instruction, such great Encouragements and Promises of huge Rewards, as will secure their Honour and Respect, their Service and Obedience to their Parents. A better Sense cannot be found to fit these Words; but because *the Nurture and the Admonition of the Lord* seems to be set in opposition to *the provoking to Wrath*; and because the Words will better bear it, and that a good Religious Education in the Christian Doctrine does not sufficiently answer to *provoking Children to Wrath*, it may be somewhat more pertinent and proper to understand, by *Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, such a Religious Admonition, and Reproof, and Castigation of Children, as is agreeable to the Doctrine, and good Spirit of Christ the Lord; because this Sense will also take in the other, and make the Opposition perfect. Would you, who are Parents, be honoured and obeyed by your Children, take the Courses that are properest for that Purpose: Do not think of bringing your Designs to pass, by being hard, morose, and always out of humour with them; by treating them inhumanly and cruelly; by discouraging them continually with Frowns and ill Looks, with Tauntings and Upbraidings, with Threats, and cruel Chastisements: They will not need so great Severities; such slavish Usage, such daily Menaces of disinheriting and casting off, and such like rugged and illiberal Treatment as is sometimes shewn them: These things do often but inflame them, and exasperate them to greater Contumacy, extinguish by degrees their natural Piety and Affections, make them avoid your Sight, fly from you, as from Mischief; to dread you like an Executioner, shake off the Yoke, as soon as possible they can, and if not hate, yet never love you more. They will be won with better Arguments than these; you may secure their Honour and Obedience better, by more natural and gentle Methods; give them such good Instructions as you find in Holy Scriptures; remember them of God's Commands, to Honour and Obey their Parents; admonish them, from thence, with the Spirit of Meekness, to take good heed to their Ways, how they transgress the Laws of God, by disobeying *their* Commands, when just and reasonable; and how they shall, one Day, be put to answer for the neglectful or contemptuous Breach of them.

Lay but, at first, this good Religious Foundation in their Minds, and you may build upon it for ever after; it will hold when all Things else fail, and it will forward all Considerations besides; it will give Strength to every Argument. This will be the readiest Way to convince young People you design their Good in all Injunctions and Commands; they will see that their Parents urge no more than God commands; and have no other Interest to pursue, than *their* Happiness. The Reception of any Argument, the Power that either Advice or Command shall obtain, depends, in a great Measure, upon the Way and Manner of propounding it: If you have once convinced the Party, that you design his Benefit, you have already gained a favourable Attention; and every Thing you say shall be considered:



But if you give him cause to suspect your Kindness, he will neglect, or coldly entertain all you shall offer. When young ones are convinced of the true Love and Kindness of their Parents, (and it is very easy to convince them by gentle Usage) they will bear with Decency and Patience a great many hard uneasy Things; Reproof, and Admonition, nay, and Punishments, will find Submission and Obedience, when they can come to think, it is in order to their Good, or at least designed for that Purpose. It is not to be thought, that any manner of Restraint, or Punishment, should be, for the Present, easy or well taken; a Parent is not to look for this, nor to have any great Regard to it; but he is so to order them, that, upon Consideration and Reflection, they may find, that all was well intended towards them, that all their Admonitions and Reproofs, Restraints and Punishments, were natural and moderate; such as were proper for their Age, Condition, and Offence; such as were likely to effect Amendment, and prevent or cure an Evil; such as other Parents wise and tender might make use of, on the like Occasions; such as Religion would advise and justify. Such Nurture and Admonition, such Instruction and Reproof, and Chastisement as this, would look as if it came from the Lord; who never grieves us willingly, or for his Pleasure, but for Necessity, for our Amendment, and our lasting Good; and such as this would secure the Honour and Respect, the Service and Obedience of Children to their Parents.

I have before observed, that when we discourse of this Matter, we speak but to a few, who are nearly concerned: Small is the Number of cruel and unnatural Parents, and therefore few are the Children who suffer at their Hands; and therefore it will not be reasonable, that many should apply what has been said, too closely to themselves, or think it their own Case, whether Parents or Children: The Children are not to think the Parents cruel or unnatural, because they have been constantly reprov'd for their evil Words or Practice; and closely restrained from doing any thing hurtful to themselves or others, or sharply punished for having done it; for these are all of them Duties in Parents, and cannot therefore be their Faults. And besides, it may very well happen, that Parents may be angry soon, and retain it long, with great Reason and Justice, when the Children think otherwise; because *they* understand things better, see the natural Tendency of many of their Actions and Humours, and the Consequences they may draw after them, and the Hazards and sinful Courses they may engage them in; and a world of things besides, which Ignorance, and Thoughtlessness, and Inexperience, keep the Children from considering. And they are too much concerned in their own behalf, to pass a true impartial Judgment on the Severities they undergo; too apt to justify their own Conduct, and to conclude themselves, if not entirely Innocent, yet not deserving such Reproof or Punishment. And after all that can be said, it were much better for the World, and more reasonable, all things considered, that more Children should suffer from the Rigours of their Parents, than do, (or ever will do) than that Parents, out of Fear of offending on this Side, should be restrained from using such Severities, as they (who know their Childrens Humours and Inclinations best) shall think convenient, and most proper; or that Children should dispute, contest and quarrel their Right, or should withdraw themselves from their Obedience, upon any such Pretence: Of the two Evils, this, beyond Comparison, would be the greater; and therefore, however hard and heavy the Dominion of some Parents may be, I know no Remedy or Way to ease the Children, whilst they continue under them, but a Submissive, Meek, and dutiful Deportment towards them: Patience, and quiet undergoing what is laid upon them, will soonest bring the Parents to Consideration and Reason, and mollify and break their Fury, and sometimes their Hearts; when a perverse and contumacious Obstinacy will  
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but exasperate to greater Anger and Severity: And Time at length will either vanquish their Austerity, or set the Children at their Liberty; so that they have not long, or much to suffer. And therefore though the Text is, *Fathers provoke not your Children to Wrath*: yet I will make an end with the Command foregoing, *Children obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right*.

## DISCOURSE V.

I TIMOTHY V. VERSE 8.

*But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.*

**A**MONGST other Duties incumbent upon Parents, that of making Provision for their temporal Livelihood is certainly one; and here commended and enjoined by St. Paul, in Words of great weight and moment: *If any provide not, &c.* In speaking to which, I intend to consider, in the *first Place*, the Terms here used; and, in the *Second*, say something to the different Proportions of Provision for Children; because *to provide*, is an indefinite Phrase, and must be determined by several Considerations and Respects: And, *thirdly*, consider the Case of disinheriting Children, for whom Parents are so obliged to make Provision, as far as it relates to us, and becomes a Case of Conscience.

*First*, Of the Terms here used: *To provide*, is to take Care of, and make Provision for the Maintenance, the Livelihood, and Subsistence, proper to the Age, Condition and Quality of any one. *To provide for our own*, is to provide for such as have any Relation to, and Dependance on us; such as are more ours than any other's: And *to provide especially for those of our own House*, is to provide for our Kindred and Family, and those who are nearly related to us, and, in this particular Place, especially our Children. *To deny the Faith*, was accounted the greatest Sin a Christian could commit: *Apostacy* was thought to be much more heinous than *Infidelity*; as a *Renegade* is much more odious than an open Adversary, made so by Accident, and not by Choice: And therefore, *to deny the Faith*, is a Phrase of great Exaggeration, and signifies the being as bad a Man, and the doing as bad things as possibly he can; though he do not actually *deny the Faith*, nor become truly an *Infidel*. For it is certain, that a Parent may be very negligent and careless of, and very cruel to his Children, without renouncing his Belief of the Christian Doctrine; the Meaning therefore of *denying the Faith*, is the acting in Contradiction to it, the neglecting or despising its Commands.

They, who profess themselves *Christians*, own and acknowledge Jesus Christ to be their King and Lawgiver; they have given up their Names to him in Baptism; they are to do as he enjoins them; they are to guide and govern themselves by his Directions, to do whatever he commands, and to leave undone whatever he forbids. This all Christians are obliged to, by virtue of their Baptism; and they profess themselves obliged to do it, by owning themselves to be Christians: And therefore, when they practise in opposition to *this Faith*, they are said to *deny it*, and to become Infidels, although they do not formally and solemnly deny their Christianity.



Christianity. It is as St. Paul expresses, *Tit. i. 16. They profess that they know God, but in Works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate*, or void of Judgment: And the doing thus, is therefore said to be *worse than being Infidel*, and doing the like, because the Unbelievers have not the same Light, Knowledge, and Understanding of these Duties that Christians have; nor is the Performance of them enjoined, under so great and weighty Penalties, nor with so great Encouragements to Infidels, as to the Christians in the Gospel.

The Meaning therefore of the Words of the Text, as applied to Parents in particular, is this: If any Parent, who professes and calls himself a Christian, neglects or refuses to make a due and fitting Provision for his own Children, according to his Understanding and Abilities, he is really a bad Man; he does in effect deny the Faith; he lets it have no Power over him; he withdraws himself from the Obedience he owes, and ought to pay, to Christ's Commands, which enjoin all Parents to provide for their Children; and he is so much worse than an Infidel, by how much he is more obliged to make such Provision for his Children, than Unbelievers are, who have not the same Commands and Laws, the same Encouragements, nor are tied by the same Penalties that Christians are.

From the Terms of the Text thus explained, it may not be amiss, before I go on to the other Heads, to observe these two Things; *First*, that the Faith of Christ does always include Obedience to the Laws of Christ. *Secondly*, that all natural Duties are tied most strongly upon Christians, by the Faith of Christ, *i. e.* by their professing Christianity. *First*, that the Faith of Christ does certainly include Obedience to the Laws of Christ; For if People are said to *deny the Faith*, by acting in opposition to it, by not performing its Injunctions and Commands, and to *keep, and hold fast the Faith* by living up to its Rules, and conforming to its Precepts, it is plain, that barely believing the Gospel, is not the Faith that will stand us in any stead of it self; and yet it is certain, that disowning externally the Belief and Profession of Christianity, is *denying the Faith*, though Men should live in the Practice and Obedience of most of Christ's Commands. It was not only possible, but practised often, in the primitive Ages of Christianity, for Men to deny themselves to be Christians in publick, and before the Magistrates, to save themselves from Starving, Banishment, or Prisons, or Death with Torments; yet, underhand, both thought themselves to be Christians, and lived as Christians: But this was a huge Mistake, and guarded frequently against by our Saviour himself; who tells his Disciples, that *they who denied him before Men*, (whatever they might think of themselves, and know of their Adherence to his Laws in Heart and Practice) *should be denied by him before his Father in Heaven, with all his holy Angels*; and gives them in charge to confess him openly, when they were called upon to do it: And St. Paul assures us, that *with the Mouth, Confession* (that Jesus is the Son of God) *is made unto Salvation*. Now it mattered not, what these People thought within themselves, nor how innocently and virtuously they might otherwise live; they did, by thus verbally disowning themselves Christians, and disclaiming that Profession, they did, to all intents and purposes, *deny the Faith*, and renounce Christianity. The Scandal and Offence they gave to the Christians was exceeding great, and mischievous; the Scorn, and Triumph, they afforded to the Jews and Heathens; the Impediments and Stops they put in the way of Converts, and doubting People, were all great, and occasioned as much Mischief and Dishonour to the Christian Name, as if they had at the same Time renounced all their virtuous and religious Practice. And since whoever embraced Christianity, engaged to prefer the being *called a Christian*, and the professing that Belief, to all the Good or Evil this World could afford, to all the Profit, Pleasure and Advantage he might any ways reap, and to all the Pain and

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Misery he might any ways undergo; since the undertaking Christianity implies all this, since this is truly *the Doctrine of the Cross*, that all Christians make Profession of in Baptism; it is evident, that he who, to save himself from either Shame or Pain, denies himself, in Word, to be a Christian, *denies the Faith*, and renounces Christianity, in a most large important Article, and shall have no Advantage from Christ's Promises, although he live a good and virtuous Life in other Respects. Now though this alone, and, of it self, is more than enough to hazard a Man's Salvation; yet is not the bare Profession of Christianity, no nor the Belief of all its Articles, enough to secure a Man from denying the Faith; because it is evident he may deny it in Works, though he believe in his Heart, and confess with his Mouth, that Jesus is the Son of God: And the Reason of that is this, that every Christian is obliged, by vertue of his Profession, not only to believe with the Heart, and make Confession with the Mouth of the Faith of Christ, but to evidence this Faith in all his Actions, to shew it in his Life and Conversation; and that all these Things are absolutely necessary, and all together make the Faith of a good Christian: And therefore, that neither the one, nor the other (but all together) will serve a Man's turn, or stand him in any stead. In a Word, if a Man can be properly said to *deny the Faith*, by neglecting and refusing to do his Duty; it is evident that Faith includes Obedience to the Laws of Christ, and is, without those Works, both vain and dead.

The *second* Thing to be observed is this; that all our Natural and our Civil Duties are strongly tied upon us, by vertue of our Profession of Christianity. It is very much to the Honour of our Religion, that it is wholly taken up in providing for the Security and Benefit of Mankind, even in this World; its general Bent and Tendency is to set Men at ease, and make them happy; its great Endeavour is to secure the Duties of all Relations to each the other, from want of which proceed all the Mischiefs in the World. It does not leave Men to be moved by such Considerations alone as Natural Reason will suggest; but furnishes them with better, and lays the powerful Commands of God upon them, with the Sanction of great and fearful Penalties to such as disobey, and with the great Encouragements of endless Happiness to Men's Obedience. Now nothing can be more to the Advantage of any Man, than that all the People with whom he has to deal, to whom he has any Relation, or upon whom he has any Dependence, should be commanded by God above, to shew him Mercy; and to do him Justice; to do him all good Offices; and to suffer none to do him Injury; and should be encouraged to all this, by Promises of the greatest Blessings, and threatned, upon neglect, with the most fearful and amazing Evils: Nothing is more likely to secure a Man's Peace and Happiness, than such a Fence as this; and yet this is the Fence that Christianity provides for every single Person in the World, by laying its Commands, extending its Promises and Threats to every single Christian, to oblige them to perform their several Duties to their several Relations throughout the World. This ought to recommend the Christian Religion to all considering People, above all other Laws and Dispensations whatsoever; for though indeed it must be owned, that natural and civil Duties fare no better, or at least not very much, under Christianity, notwithstanding all this Care, than under *Judaism*, or *Mahometism*, or *Paganism*; yet this is not for want of any thing in Christianity, but of good Sense and Consideration in Mankind. The Religion is not any where defective, but its Professors; that is still excellent and most divine, but we are sottish, wicked, and worse than Infidels. It will, one Day, be more tolerable for Heathens, Jews, and Turks, than unbelieving disobedient Christians. There is no Religion in the World was ever framed to make Men happy, even in this Life, like that of Jesus Christ, if it were thoroughly pursued: A Man cannot



cannot possibly be made uneasy, or miserable, or suffer any Evil at another's Hands, without the Violation of some Christian Command; which, if obeyed, would have secured him.

Having therefore premised these Things; which shew sufficiently the great Obligation Christian Parents lie under, to make Provision for their Children, it is Time to come to be more particular, and to see what sort of Provision they *are* to make; which was the *second* Thing to be considered.

To determine with any manner of Exactness, or to any Use and Purpose, the Proportion of Provision Parents are to make for Children, it will be necessary to have consideration and respect to their Age, Condition, and Capacity. Respect must needs be had to their *Age*, because there is a Time when Children are so helpless, that all they want, and can enjoy, must be provided for them, and it can lie on no body so well as Parents to do it: And in this Case, *Provision* includes every thing that Children stand in need of; this Nature teaches, and I need not farther insist on it. As they grow up in Years, their *Quality* and Condition, their Capacity and Abilities both of Body and Mind, are to come into consideration; and they must be more and more inured to Labour, Diligence, and Industry. It is not to be thought, that Parents are obliged only to provide for their Children, Money, Lands, and Houses, and then have done their Duty; but they must provide them with Abilities of Body and Mind, both to obtain, preserve, and use the Benefits they intend to bestow upon them: They must accustom them, whilst young, to application and attention to Business: These Things are necessary both to Poor and Rich; and, without them, the Poor will never be rich, and the Rich will be quickly poor. It is certain, that the Poor can never discharge the Duty of Parents well to their Children, without inuring them to Labour and Hardship; that is the Provision they are only capable of making for them, and *that* they are obliged to *make*. God gives their Children Health and Strength, and *they* must see them well employed and used; *that* is the Portion God enables them to give them; and the sooner they begin with them, and the closer they pursue them to Labour, Diligence, and Industry, the kinder they will be to them, the better they will provide for them. It is certain that the poorest Parents in the World are obliged to provide for their Children, according to the best of their Abilities; and as certain, that they can provide for them no otherwise, than by accustoming them to Labour, and Industry; and therefore it is certain, that they are obliged to provide thus for them.

It looks, at first, like doing them no harm, to let them continue lazy, idle, and doing nothing; and many poor People are extremely guilty of this way of Education, imagining it a piece of Kindness to their Children, to let them rather beg their Bread, than put them to labour for it; a Mistake not only mischievous to the Commonwealth, but of most pernicious Consequence to their Children, the unkindest thing that they can do to them; for though it please them for the Present, yet it entails on them perpetual Misery, and very often untimely Death, by engaging them in wicked Courses, the sure and ready Road to Ruine; whereas the bringing them up to Labour, and continual Business of some kind or other, keeps them, at least, in a mean Sufficiency, if not in Plenty, and puts them into a Capacity of emerging out of their Difficulties, and bettering their Condition. So that I do not see, but that poor People do really offend God, as well as injure their Children, by keeping them idle, by not inuring them most constantly to such Labours as God enables them to bear. We know that God ties them to do what they can for their Children, and they are capable of doing nothing but this for them; and therefore God hath tied them to this; and if they will not do this for their Children, St. Paul will tell them, *they deny the Faith, and are worse than Infidels.*

As



As for the richer and the better sort of People, their Quality and Condition is also to be considered in determining what kind of Provision is to be made for their Children. Custom and the Usages of the Country make things decent and fit, which otherwise would be indifferent; and Distinction of Quality and Condition is absolutely necessary to the keeping up Quiet and Order in the World: It is impossible for Mankind to live in Peace, without a due Subordination of one Condition to another: And therefore, though these Things, considered by themselves, appear neither Moral nor Religious, but Matters of Ceremony, Decency and Form; yet who so sets himself to consider Things thoroughly, will find, that these Things, in Conjunction with one another, are so absolutely necessary to the securing Peace and Order; that, without them, neither Religion nor Morality could live and flourish in the World: And therefore they, who think meanly of these Things, and that Mankind is above them, are, it may be, mistaken in Mankind, and understand not Human Nature enough; and they, who endeavour to subvert and overturn them, are not aware of the Evils that would ensue. It cannot be told, in what Rank of Virtues, Decency, and Honour, and Distinction of Quality and Condition stand; but yet it is easy to see, that, without these Things, there would be nothing but Confusion and Disorder in the World. It is therefore possible for one Man to do that, by reason of his Quality and Condition, with Reason and Innocence, which another cannot do, by reason of *his* Condition, without Offence and Blame. It is possible for a Man of good Quality to make such Provision for his Children, as may be truly faulty, which if a meaner Man had made, he had done well and laudably. And therefore, till Men find a better Rule to walk by, in these Cases, than Decency, and Custom, and good Fame, they will not do either well or wisely, to neglect and overlook them, though I cannot assign them the particular Command of God which they offend against in such Neglect.

Upon these Accounts, it may be utterly impossible for any one else to prescribe to a Parent a Rule of Provision for his Children, either as to Kind, or Quantity; but it will not be difficult for himself to do it, taking these Things into Consideration. Only let him not be unmindful of these two Things. *First*, that he never educate his Children above the Provision he designs to make for them: And, *Secondly*, that whatever Provision he designs to make for them, he inure them to Labour, Diligence, and Industry, to Attention, and Application, as they are capable of bearing. This is common to all Qualities and Conditions; this must go along with all Children; the poorest are not too mean for these Qualities, nor the richest above them.

*First*, A Parent is to take good heed that he never educate his Children above the Provision he designs to make for them; as well because it will slacken their Diligence and Industry, upon Presumption there will not be so great Occasion for them, as also that the Disappointment will be great and troublesome, without any manner of Advantage; it being much more easy to bear with a mean Condition constantly, than to fall into it from a Plentiful and Good one; which is the Case of People better educated than provided for: The soft and tender Usage of People, whilst young, and capable of undergoing Labour and more Hardship, is truly a Diskindness to them, without an answerable Provision for them afterwards; for whenever they are left to shift for themselves, they are no better than exposed naked, as it were, and defenceless, unable to procure themselves a Livelihood, and in much worse Condition than their Inferiours. This is the Misfortune frequently, of being born of an ancient and genteel Family, or of Parents presumed to be much richer than they truly are: Their Name, and Quality, and Reputation, entail upon them Misery and Want; they must be bred as if they were all to inherit great Estates, when they are to inherit nothing but a Name that does them Mischief: This is not designed a Kindness



Kindness to the Children, but generally proceeds from Pride and Vanity; which make the Children mean and miserable *indeed*, for fear the Parents should be *thought* so. It is one of the unkindest Things a Parent can do to breed his Children up in Delicacy, and Softness, whilst they are young and strong, and then to leave them to themselves to work their Fortune out of Weakness and Folly: It is very ill for the richest Parents that are, to deal too tenderly with their Children, let them leave them as well provided as they can; but it is great Cruelty in Parents, that are able to leave them little or nothing, to leave them Pride and Laziness, and an Incapacity both of Body and Mind to do themselves any Service; as if the Reproach and Blame, that must unavoidably fall on these unkind Parents, were not more to be respected and feared, than the Reputation of having a small Estate, and being unable to leave them a considerable Fortune. This is apparently preferring their own *Fame* to the true and lasting *Benefit* of their Children, in a material Point, which is a very ill way of providing for them.

And these People, of appearing Fashion and Quality (though to be pitied more) are as much to be blamed, as the poorer sort, who will not inure their Children to Labour and close Application; for their Inability to provide for them, according to their Quality and Condition, will not excuse them for neglecting to do *as* they are *able*. The Effects of this unadvised way of Education are so remarkably bad, that it is a wonder Men should need any Caution against it: The Men-children either fall into the Meanness of Servitude, the Refuge of the idle and uninstructed part of Mankind, or betake themselves, in despair, to the Wars abroad, or to Robberies at home: The Women fall too often into the Hands of wicked Tempters, through want of Ability to employ themselves in honest Courses, and an utter Incapacity of maintaining their Condition; their Poverty making them unfit for their *Equals*, and their soft expensive Education making their *Inferiours* afraid to match with them, besides the Hazard of bringing *the Spirit of a good Family* along with them.

These are some of the usual Mischiefs of a Parent's educating his Children much above the Provision he is able, or willing, to make for them, and leave them; sufficient to discourage any one from doing it, considering how much easier it is to advance and rise above our Hopes, than to fall from our Expectations; and how much kinder it is, to leave our Children Satisfaction and Content, if not Surprise and Pleasure, than Grief and Shame upon their Disappointment.

There is also the opposite Extream that is not to be forgotten; and that is, a mean and fordid Education, when they design to leave, or cannot help the leaving them, a great Fortune. I am not directly to charge this Humour with a Sin; but it is a huge Indecency, and piece of Indiscretion; a Thing that has often had very ill Consequences, and cannot easily have good; for the young People, either seeing good reason to hope, or finding for certain, that they shall one Day succeed to a Fortune superior to the Condition they are educated in, do either begin to despise, or to neglect their Business: They think themselves above their Calling, or imagine they shall stand in little need of its Assistance; and, upon either account, slacken their Care and Industry, withdraw their Minds from their proper Concerns, and become very quickly bad Servants; and, as soon as they come to Liberty and their Estate, fall into all Extravagance, and make a very ill Use of both. In a Word, a mean and fordid Education, with the Prospect of a plentiful Condition to follow, will hardly escape one of these two Extreams; either by use contract a mean and fordid Spirit, and, in the midst of Plenty, live a wretched and penurious Life, so that a mean Estate had been sufficient and most proper; or else there will so much Time be lost in the Way they are in, and they will shake off their Condition, and betake themselves to loose and profuse Courses, and be undone by too great Plenty.

A prudent



A prudent Parent will therefore carefully avoid both these Extreams, of educating his Children much *above*, or much *below* the Provision he designs to make for them; and that this may not seem to be out of the way, it is, if well considered, the surest means of rendring the Provision they make, most serviceable and useful to their Children: For, by these means, the Children have Encouragement to prosecute their Business with Industry and Application, knowing their Parents will take Care to farther them, and help them according to their Beginnings; and that such Help and Assistance, of it self, will not suffice, without their own great Care and Industry, which will also be a Spur on that Side. They must not be wanting to themselves, no more than their Parents will be; and then their Affairs are likely to succeed: For, if they either perceive their Parents unable to go through as they begun, they are discouraged, grieved and shamed, and thereupon grow desperately careless; or able to do above what their present Condition requires, they grow, as was before observed, intolerably negligent, weary of their way, and longing after Liberty; which, being unseasonably obtained, is commonly used intemperately.

This is therefore one Thing that Parents will observe in making Provision for their Children, to fit them with an Education suitable to it, to keep a Mean, without either over or under-doing the Matter; for since they are obliged in Duty to make Provision for them, they ought in Reason and Prudence to take all Care they can to render such Provision the most serviceable and useful to them.

The other Thing, a Parent should not be unmindful of, is this; that whatever great Provision he intends to make for his Children, he do by all means inure them to Diligence and Industry, to Application and Attention of Mind: These Qualities may chance to make some amends for the defect of Money or Estate, but no Provision will sufficiently supply the defect of *them*: Many emerge, by these, out of great Difficulties and Straits, and make their way to Plenty and Prosperity; and many more, for want of these, decline from Plenty to much Misery; so that no Fortune is above, or can continue well without them. There can be no better Reason assigned, why so many People of Fashion are distinguished as much by their Vices, as their Birth and Quality, from their Inferiours, than that they are so softly educated, and fall into the worst of Hands, *i. e.* their own, so soon: There is a great deal of Care, and Time, and Money, oft expended on them; but it does not succeed so well with them, because they must not be pressed to any thing; they must take what they will, and never be constrained to any thing laborious and difficult. A close Attention and Application would break their Spirits quickly, and they would never love their Business again. This is the Opinion of fond and ignorant People together, and quickly agreed to by the young ones, who are always afraid of being overcharged, as well as their Parents, and think their Hearts will break a great deal sooner than they will: A Miscarriage of this kind does seldom or never happen, if things are well inquired into; the Miscarriages are generally for want of this Attention and close Application. These sort of People will unavoidably have Liberty enough betimes, and therefore may well bear with Restraint and Labour, before-hand, for a Season; and if they are not taught how to employ their Time in something fit and worthy of them, whilst they are young, they will never know how to do it, when they grow up, and are wholly Masters of it; so that the Parents, who are only careful to provide Estates for their Children, do truly forget half of their Business; which is, to fit their Children for their Estates.

Now since it is not either fit, or decent, or at least not customary, to put these People of Quality to Trades or settled Callings, it must needs be worse with them, than their Inferiours, if they have not something equivalent to such Employments, to quicken their Industry and Diligence, to keep them busied and amused as profitably



as they can, to inure them to the Labours of the Mind, and fit them for Services that may, in Time, be proper for them.

There is no Body, but is born and obliged to serve his Country in some Capacity or other; and they, who are most at Liberty from their natural and domestick Necessities, whose Bodies are not tied to labour, and earn the Sustenance of a Family, and to provide for their Relations, by following some Vocation or Employment, are most obliged to give their Service to their Country, because they have most Leisure, and fewer Avocations; and this the most profuse and negligent, the most voluptuous, idle and unserviceable Creatures of Quality that are, know not how to deny: They are always ready to own their Obligation to serve their Country in Offices of Honour and Advantage: But then it is certain, that they ought to be fit and qualified to discharge those Duties to the Publick; which they can never be, unless they are bred up, whilst young, in a most diligent industrious Pursuit of such Attainments as will qualify them for such noble Services.

If Parents were as much obliged to seek their Childrens Mischiefs, as they are to provide well for them, and were to study long for it, they could not find a more effectual Way of doing it, than by breeding them up in Idleness and Softness, leaving them to themselves, and to their natural Listlessness; neither charging their Memory, nor quickning their Intention, nor trying their Judgment, nor putting them to any Strait or Difficulty: They would, without any farther Trouble, be undone; for, under all these Prejudices, the Soul will still be active, and, not being under any good Direction, will be active to Mischiefs: The natural Inclinations will unquestionably sway; for there is neither Reason nor Employments to hinder them, which are the only Things we have to oppose to the Importunity of Temptations. *How can I do this Thing, and Sin against God?* is an Argument of great Religion; but to be well employed, and full of honest Business, is a much greater Security, in as much as it is better to be deaf, than parly with the Devil, when he is laying Snares, and trying to corrupt us. By doing nothing, you shall quickly learn to do Evil; it is the Stair below it, and you cannot miss of stepping on it. The Senses are awake to every thing that calls; ready to entertain all evil Motions and Suggestions, comply with all Desires; and, in a Word, to fall into all the Snares that are laid for them.

Now though these Matters do not look, at first, as if they any ways belonged to making due Provision for Children: yet Experience will quickly shew, that all Provision else, without this Care, will either be to none, or to little purpose: A great Fortune will only prove a great Temptation to Folly and Extravagance, unless the Mind be fitted to it, and prepared to use it well and wisely: It will only serve to expose them to the greater Scorn and Contempt, and shew their Weakness more conspicuously; So that the Kindness, Parents are so forward to express in amassing great Estates and Fortunes for their Children, will not be so truly beneficial to them as they design it, unless they also take more Care about their Education, by inuring them to Diligence and Industry, by accustoming them to close Application and Attention to whatever they are about, though mean and inconsiderable; for by these means they will contract good Habits, and be fitted for Business of greater Moment, when it comes upon them, and fitted to repair the Breaches Chance may make in their Estates. And that must certainly be the best Provision for Children, which will stand them in best stead in all Conditions; which will help them to raise themselves from Meanness to Sufficiency, or Plenty, and help them to improve a Good one to better, and help them to prevent a Fall, or to bear it well, and to recover it again. This is the Benefit of a good Education, being accustomed to pains and labour both of Body and Mind, whilst young and pliable, and susceptible of Impressions:



Impressions: And therefore this should be provided for especially, and in the first Place: This is to be the Bottom and Foundation, and upon this we may build whatever Good we will, for it will bear it; and, without it, all the rest will fall to nothing.

I should come, in the next Place, to consider how this Duty of Parents, to provide for their Children, comes to be so frequently dispensed withal, by disinheriting of Sons, and depriving Daughters of their Fortunes; how these Proceedings are reconcileable with Reason, Nature, and good Conscience, and the Laws of our Religion: But this will deserve to be considered apart, and by itself.

## DISCOURSE VI.

I TIMOTHY V. VERSE 8.

*But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.*

HAVING shewn already, from these Words, the Obligation Parents lie under to make Provision of Things temporal for the Livelihood and Subsistence of their Children, according to their several Ages, Quality, and Capacities; and laid down some Directions withal, how to make such Provision more serviceable and useful to them, by a prudent Education of them; and shewn also, how Christians, neglecting so to do, are said *to deny the Faith*, by not fulfilling, but acting in opposition to, the Commands of Christ, which injoin all Parents to make a due and fitting Provision for their Children, and become thereby *worse than Infidels*; i. e. than such as believe not the Gospel of Christ, and consequently have no other Motives to the discharging the Duty they owe their Children, than what bare Reason, and natural Affection, and the civil Laws of their Country, suggest and offer: Whereas the Christians have, moreover, the positive Commands of God, the common Parent of us all, the great Encouragement of Promises of endless and inestimable Recompences, and the Threatnings of everlasting Death to the Neglect, or the Contempt of God's Commandments, to stir them to Obedience. I am now to shew, how this Duty of Parents, to provide for their Children, comes to be so frequently dispensed withal, by the disinheriting of Sons, and denying or depriving Daughters of their Fortunes; how these Proceedings are reconcileable with Reason, Nature, and good Conscience, and the Laws of our Religion, and then to make an End of this Subject.

That Children should succeed to their Parents, and inherit their Estates and Goods, is agreed, on all Hands, by all Nations that were ever civilized, and governed by Laws; and the Reason is, that no one hath a *better* Right or Claim to them, whether we consider the Labour of the Parents in acquiring them, or their Affection to their Children: For since they love no Body like their Children, and have a Right to the Fruits of their own Industry and Labour, this Love entitles them best to their Estates, when they are dead, and have done with them: And therefore the civil Law, (which is the Publick Reason) gives to the Children the Estate of their Parents, though they die intestate, and without any Signification of their Will and Pleasure;



sure; presuming, that they, who make no Declaration to the contrary, do always intend to go along with Reason and natural Affection, which both bestow the Estates of Parents on their Children.

But though this be very certain, yet the Manner of proportioning out this Estate to the Children, how it is to be divided among them, is, and hath always been, very uncertain; most Kingdoms of the World differing from one the other, and most of them, from themselves, at different times: And indeed, it seems to be a Matter properly determinable by the Laws and Constitutions of every Country: For though we are importuned by many loud and noisy Pretences of a *Divine Right of Succession*, in favour of the eldest born; yet, if examined well, the Right of Succession will be found to be built upon prudential Considerations only, backed with the Authority of God's Commands to his own People the *Jews*. When a Child is born, the Parent sees there is one to inherit what he has, and to succeed to all his Labours; and seeks no farther for an Heir. Thus far is natural, that this Child should enjoy whatever the Parent leaves, and build up his Name and Family, because there is no one else to do it: But when, in time, the Parent comes to have more Children; then the *Necessity* of the Eldest succeeding grows somewhat less, because there are more Children that can answer to the same Design and End, and build up the Name and Family, as well as the Eldest; and then the *Necessity* is changed into *Decency* and *Conveniency*. It is then most decent, that the Elder should be preferred to the Younger, because he was before him, and has done nothing to deserve the being cast behind him: It is Reason enough that he should succeed to all the Advantages, if there be no Reason to the contrary. To be born the first, is, as it were, the lucky Chance that God hath given him; the Lot, by which the Differences that might arise betwixt the Children of the same Parents, is decided; and this is that which I call the *Conveniency* of the eldest Children's succeeding to the better Part of their Parents Estates: For where that is found Necessary to the raising and preserving Families, that the better Part of an Estate should go along with him who is designed to build up the Name of the Tribe and House, there can be no Determination made with less Exception, or Blame, or occasion of Dispute and Quarrel, than that the Eldest should succeed; because, that *he* should be the Eldest, was the Determination of God, and not the Artifice or Design of any Man. Add to this, that the Elder may well be presumed to be the Wiser, and consequently fitter to be the Head and Father of the Family; and, I believe, there will appear but little more of *Divine Right* in the Succession of the Eldest, than of any other, excepting what is fetched from the Commands of God to his own People the *Jews*. That the Eldest amongst the *Jews* were born to many Privileges and Honours, above the rest of their Brethren, is evident from abundance of Places in the Old Testament; and that they were to inherit their Fathers Possessions, appears both from Command, and from Examples. So in *Deut. xxi. 15. If a Man hath two Wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him Children, both the beloved and the hated: And if the first-born Son be her's that was hated; then it shall be, when he maketh his Sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the Son of the beloved, First-born, before the Son of the hated, which is indeed the First-born: But he shall acknowledge the Son of the Hated for the First-born, by giving him a double Portion of all that he hath: For he is the Beginning of his Strength, the Right of the First-born is his.* So Jacob says, *Gen. xlix. 3. Reuben, thou art my First-born, my Might, and the Beginning of my Strength; the Excellency of Dignity, and the Excellency of Power.* As if the Right of the First-born were built on this. From whence also it appears, that the Right of the First-born was a Right to a double Portion of the Father's Estate. Which is seen also, *1 Chron. v. 1. Now the Sons of Reuben the First-*



*First-born of Israel, (for he was the First-born, but forasmuch as he defiled his Father's Bed, his Birth-right was given unto the Sons of Joseph, &c. Not that the Sons of Joseph had the Dignity or Principality above their Brethren; but that Joseph's Children were the Heads of two Tribes, which was a double Portion, the Right of the First-born. So Solomon bids his Mother ask for Adonijah the Kingdom also, for he was his elder Brother: And so it is said of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xxi. 3. that he gave his Sons great Gifts of Silver and of Gold, and of precious Things, with fenced Cities in Judah; but the Kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the First-born. So that it need not be doubted, but that, amongst the Jews, the First-born succeeded to at least a double Portion of all that the Father had, by God's Appointment and Command; and might lay claim to it by a Divine Right: But how any one else, but Jews, can make such claim to such Succession, is not yet so manifest. But how then can the disinheriting of Children become a Case of Conscience, if so be that the Laws and Commands of God to the Jews, in these Matters, affect not Christians? In answer to which, we say, that a Command of God to the Jews, neither is, nor ought to be, the Rule of Conscience to Christians, any farther than such Command is agreeable to the Light of Nature, and good Reason: And they who, through Weakness, and an undue Application of such Command to themselves, think themselves thereby obliged, are under a Mistake, and bring upon themselves a new Yoke; for a Command to the Jews, obliges Jews only: But when a Command of God to the Jews carries its Reason, Decency and Conveniency along with it; when the wise and civilized People of most Nations adopt it into their own Country Laws, and when the Usages and Customs of ones own Land run the same Way, and there is nothing better and more reasonable to object to it; then such Command of God to the Jews, begins to look as if it affected Christians also: It looks, I say, as if it did, but indeed it does not; for it is, in truth, the Weight of these other Considerations that enforces such Command: And because it has had the Honour of being commanded by God, Men prefer it, and make it a Rule to themselves, which yet, for its own sake, and without those other Considerations, they never would: as appears from our passing by a great many Commands of God to the Jews, without any Manner of regard had to them, only because we do not find them reasonable in themselves, nor convenient for us.*

The disinheriting of Children therefore becomes a Case of Conscience, upon these Considerations, to Christians: The Christian Law commands all Parents to make a reasonable and due Provision for their Children; but because this is general and indefinite, and a Man is as much to seek, as before, what Quantity and Proportion of Provision he is obliged to make, therefore he looks out for a more particular Rule of Direction in this Matter: And finding that the Laws of wise and civil Nations have, at all times, generally agreed to prefer the First-born to a considerable Share of the Father's Estate, beyond the rest, for the raising and preserving Families, and for the avoiding many Mischiefs, and for other good Reasons; and that the Laws of God himself to his own People were the same, and that the Laws and Customs of his own Country agree to it, and that there is nothing reasonable or material to object, or oppose to so doing, the Conscience cannot find a better Rule to walk by; and since it will walk by some or other, it will most reasonably choose the best, and that which is least liable to exceptions and inconveniencies.

Since therefore these are the Reasons and Considerations, that induce an Obligation on the Consciences of Parents to make such a particular Provision for their eldest Children, by leaving them the better Part of their Estates, they will unavoidably feel Concern and Trouble when they offend against this Rule, without sufficient Cause and Reason; such Cause and Reason as wise and civil Nations assign and allow of by their Laws and Customs.



The Causes, that are commonly assigned to justify Parents disinheriting their Children, are a great many: I will only mention the most considerable. And, *First*, the striking of Parents has been all along esteemed a sufficient Cause for the disinheriting and casting off Children: There seems to be so much Undutifulness and Impiety in such Violence, that one cannot hear of such an Action, without desiring and assenting to its Punishment. The Ancients allowed but of two Excuses for this Crime; the one was, when they could not possibly avoid a huge Mischief from their Parents without striking them: It must be in defending themselves; and that not from a small Correction, or a little Suffering, but from some Blow that might endanger them; some Evil, that could not be presumed to be intended by a Parent to a Child, but might be the Effect of a blind and unadvised Rage: In such a Case it was *excused*, rather than *allowed*, if a Child should strike his Parent: They did not, for this Misfortune, think he deserved to be undone, and disinherited; because they believed the Parent himself, when he recovered his Sobriety of Mind, and usual Calm, would be glad to find a great Mischief prevented by such Opposition. The other Excuse, of Children wounding or striking Parents, was; if it were done in fighting for, and defending their Country: The Ancients preferred the Liberties and Safety of their Country to all other Considerations whatsoever: If *we* do not so too, it is not that we have either more Reason, Honour, or Religion, than they had; but a more contracted, narrow Mind, and Interest to think on. If it had happened that a Father took Part with the Enemies of his Country, and in Fight were met and wounded by his Son: the Father afterwards might not, for this, bestow his Birth-right on another; he was not hereby presumed undutiful or impious, nor to be punished as such: The Duty he owed his Country was antecedent to, and greater than what he owed his Parent; and the Parent was in a wrong Place when he suffered at his Hands. And yet, for any Cause besides, or upon any other Account than these two, the Children might not touch the Hair of the Parents Head, nor lift up an Hand against them, without falling from all the Right and Advantage their Birth and Descent might entitle them to.

*Another Cause*, that justified the Parent's disinheriting his Child, was, the being found to have contrived his Death by Poison, or other secret Method; the having laid Snares to intrap him into any Mischief: He was deservedly thought unworthy to receive any Benefit from the Parents, who had contrived, or was privy to any Design of doing them any Mischief, not only to the taking away their Life, but to the hurting them in Body or Estate. Nay, if the Children did but *accuse* their Parents of any Crime, by which they were brought into hazard of either Banishment, or Mutilation, or of losing their Lives, and the Parents were acquitted, if the Children did this voluntarily, and without Constraint, the Parents might justly disinherit them, and cast them off, although this Accusation were of a Crime committed against the State: And that, without Contradiction to what has been said before; for a Child is only authorized to oppose the Parent, even to his Mischief, when he is openly and manifestly in War against his Country; but not when the Matter is only suspected, and not proved, as in Accusations it is not: For Children are presumed to think the best of their Parents, and to construe every thing in their favour, and not to be convinced, when it is against them, but by plain and evident Matter of Fact: And therefore an Accuser of his Parents has been all along looked upon as a malicious, odious Creature, and therefore very fit to be cut off from all their Favour.

These Things touch the Parents Person, and are immediately the Effects of the Childrens ill Intentions; they are concerned in them: There are other Causes that justify the Parent disinheriting Children, when they are only *negligent of their Duty*, either



either carelessly or designedly ; when the Parent falls into Frenzy, or any such Disability ; when he is taken Captive by Enemies abroad, or imprisoned at home ; if the Child neglect either to look carefully after him, and to make due Provision for him ; or to get him set at Liberty, if it be in his Power : All these Cases afford the Parent, when he recovers his Understanding and his Freedom, just Occasion of disinheriting, and throwing by such Child ; for every Body sees he was unnatural, and deserves no Favour. It is but fit that he should be, in his turn, neglected and exposed, who suffered his Parent to be so served, when he could, with his Ease, have hindered it. *With his Ease*, we must add ; for we must not hastily conclude, that all Children offend against their Duty, who do not pay their Parents Debts, and deliver them from Bonds and Imprisonment : For sometimes the Children are just able to live themselves, and have Families of their own to maintain ; and, if they should discharge their Parents Debts, must contract new ones of their own : And sometimes Parents are so extravagant, that there would be no end of paying for them. And therefore all things must be well considered, before we condemn the Children who suffer their Parents to lie in Prison or Captivity : And we must say, at present, that they who can, with Ease, or with no great Disease and Inconveniency, deliver them from any Hardships, are so much obliged to do it, that the Neglect thereof is justly punishable with disinheriting, whenever the Parent recovers to an Ability of leaving them, or depriving them of, any Estate.

The *other Causes*, that are assigned to justify the disinheriting Children, are such as concern not the Parent's *Person*, but his Fame and Reputation in some Respects : When their Faults are scandalous, and reflect Disgrace and Infamy upon the Parents and the Family ; when they are extremely wicked and immoral, and give no hopes of Reformation and Amendment, but are, to all Appearance, irreclaimable. Vice and Virtue are of as much Importance, and therefore as much to be considered by Laws, as Right and Wrong, in the building and preserving Families and Tribes : And it tends exceedingly to the Advantage of a State and Government, that Virtue in Children have the Encouragement of hoping to succeed to their Father's Estate, and that notorious Vice should receive the like Discouragement. There is no Body thinks, that the Compassions of Nature (which are oftentimes its Weakness) should carry it above the Considerations of Virtue and Goodness, *i. e.* that a Child should, without dispute, succeed to all the Advantages of Honour and Estate, let him be never so vicious and immoral, and every way unworthy of his Birth and Education, only because he happened to be born of such Parents. A Parent has not a Method more likely to succeed, nor any Restraint more powerful over the insolent or vicious Tempers of Children, than the Power of putting them by their Estates, when they make themselves unworthy of them : And therefore it is the greater Wonder, and the greater Pity also, to see some Parents so unadvisedly divest themselves of this Power before their time, by putting their Children in full Possession of what they have before their Death.

The Case indeed may sometimes happen, when it may be fit and reasonable, and profitable so to do ; but it is but very seldom, and the Necessity ought to be pressing, and the Advantage very great and certain before it is done ; because the Events of such a Practice have been often mischievous, and very pitiable. The Children thank them once for all ; they thank them once for that, whose Hope would have kept them in a dutiful Dependance all their Lives long : This forward, and intended Kindness of the Parents has made many Children ungracious and unnatural, that would have been, at least to all Appearance, both dutiful and observant, if they had held them still in Hope and Expectation. There is a huge Difference to be made betwixt a sordid and unnatural Closeness, that will part with nothing to Children before



before Death, and such an open and profuse Folly, as will part with every Thing, and lay the Parent at the Mercy of the Child. In such a Case, the Parent lets go the hold he has upon his Children, and loses one of the most effectual Means of keeping them dutiful and good, and virtuous and obedient: For when there is no more Expectation, there will be no more Dependance; and then it will be well, if they only grow neglectful, and not also insolent and unnatural.

But this a little by the by, when I was shewing how reasonable and justifiable it is in Parents to disinherit Children, whose Immoralities and Wickedness cry loud to Heaven, and reflect Shame and Dishonour on the Family, and exclude all hope of Reformation, or of being an useful Member of the Commonwealth: And therefore if a Daughter were, at any Time, found to have transgressed the Laws of Honour and Virtue, she was, without any farther Consideration, left to the Pity of her Parents, and could lay claim to no Provision, either by the Laws of God or Man.

You see that all these Causes are so reasonable and pressing, that, at the first hearing and considering them, they justify the Parents disinheriting their Children: They leave no matter of Complaint or Murmuring behind them: When once we are convinced the Children are guilty of any of these Things, we acquit the Parents casting them off; and the Parents are acquitted by themselves; their Conscience makes them no Reproaches of Cruelty, Injustice, or want of natural Affection, to their Children. In all these Cases, the Childrens Offences dispence with the Parents Duty, and remove or set aside their Obligation to make Provision for them; and, without these Faults, a Parent will neither be easy nor innocent in casting off his Children: He must not therefore advise only with his own Passion or Humour, but with the Laws and Customs of his Country; he must have such Reasons as other People will approve, and such Cause as will justify him to such as know the Case, though Strangers to him: Nay, though the Laws and Customs may leave a Man to act very *Arbitrarily*, yet it will not be long *Satisfactorily*, unless there appear good Reason at the Bottom. A Parent will not be easy after the fit of Anger is over, in casting off his Child; unless there be better Reason for so doing than appears to the World, or Reason enough appearing, to justify him to others, in what he does.

A Man can never despise the Opinion of the World, or bear a hard Censure with Ease, unless he know something more of the Matter than the World knows, or think himself injured by such Censure; and therefore a Parent must know of more Offences and Provocations than other People know of, to be easy in rejecting his Child, or other People must know enough to justify him. These Things are not well enough considered by all Parents, who exercise this supreme Authority over their Children, and disinherit them, and cast them off, for weak and trivial Causes. Sometimes, for no better Reason than some *Unfightliness* or ill Shape, as if the Parents *Fancy* (unnaturally nice) were to pass for *Judgment*, and the Children must be punished for what they cannot help, and for what the Parents are themselves to blame too often. Sometimes for a *defect of Parts* and Abilities, not such as would suffice for the Plain and Honest purposes of Life; but such as are to render them accomplished and agreeable, which are often too near to forwardness and vanity, and confidence, and might be better spared. Sometimes for some *Personal Dislike*, which is really at the Bottom unaccountable, and therefore blameable; for Parents never must pretend *Antipathy* and natural *Aversion* to their Children; the Subject will not bear it, and whatever Parent feels it, he ought to suspect himself of something much amiss, and it will never pass for a good Excuse for neglecting Children. Sometimes they throw them off for small Miscarriages, and little venial Faults, that *might* be pardoned to a tolerably good *Servant*, and *should* be overlooked in *Children*. It is plain, from many positive Commands, and many Prohibitions, in Holy Scriptures,



tures, as well as from Experience and Examples; that Parents *can* be hard and unnatural to their Children, and do them great Injury; or else it would be strange to tell them, that they ought to consider and make Allowances for the Miscarriages of their Children, to remember they are heedless, wanton, and unmindful of the Consequences of their Actions, and deserve Forgiveness, even when some fits of Obstinacy will not, for the present, let them ask it; and that it would be over-rigorous to take Advantage of them.

Sometimes it also happens, that the Children are dispossessed, first of the Father's Love, and then of all their Hopes of Succession, by wrong Surmise or false Suggestion; they are unhappily mistaken of ill Designs by the Parents themselves, or secretly accused by others of something that will make them odious to their Parents, and unworthy of their Favour. Sometimes the *second* Wife is to make way to the Inheritance for her own Children, by false and soft Insinuations, to the Prejudice of the Children of the first Marriage, and sometimes by downright Accusation of them; and sometimes this ill Province falls to the share of other Kinsmen and Relations, whose Prospect of succeeding is not very distant. Nothing can well be more malicious and wicked than this, and the least that a Parent can do, will be to consider, who, and whose Friends they are, that come to provoke and set him against his own Children; he ought in Reason to suspect such as shall certainly be Gainers, if his Displeasure take effect, and proceed to disinherit: He is obliged to be very cautious how he admits of Accusations, and to weigh all things well, before he believe: for the Peace of his Mind will very much depend upon the Care and Diligence he uses to get good Information. And here it is, that it seems proper to meet with an *Observation, which, they say*, [Bishop Sander's Sermon. 14. ad Aul. p. 199.] *is grounded upon manifold Experience, that where the right Heirs have been disinherited, upon almost whatsoever Pretence, the Blessing of God hath not usually followed upon the Persons, and seldom hath the Estate prospered in the Hands of those that have succeeded in their rooms.* It is with this Observation, I believe, as with most others, (where the Judgments of God are called in to execute Vengeance) that one or two Examples either make a Rule, or confirm it, if made before; and a hundred others go for nothing, or are overlooked, that do not fall in with such a Maxim, especially when it is on the Side of Justice and Religion, to all Appearance.

A Parent may most certainly disinherit his Son, for good Causes, such as I have been already mentioning, with the Consent of Reason and Sense, the Laws and Customs of wise Nations, and the Examples of the best Men, and with the Approbation of God's Law, and his own Conscience, as certainly as he may do any thing else: And when this guilty Person is removed, why the next Heir may not succeed without any Terror on his Mind, or Apprehension of God's Anger and Judgments to follow, one can never see a Reason. What Place can the Anger of God, or his Judgments have, where neither the Parent nor the Successor have sinned? If, indeed, the Parent do wilfully, furiously, and without just Cause, disinherit the eldest Son, God may, if he see fit, (and that is all) punish the Injustice of the Parent, in bringing to misery the appointed Heir; or if the appointed Heir has, by unjust and wicked Means, by Lies and false Suggestions, abused his Parent, and excited him to disinherit the true Heir, he may be Debtor to God's Justice in this World, and be punished for such wicked Fraud, either in his Person or Estate, or both, as God pleases: But when a Man comes innocently, and without his fault or seeking, to inherit an Estate, there can be no Reason to fear God's Anger, or apprehend his Judgments, or the want of his Blessing, if he do not otherwise provoke him. The truth of it is, Mankind is very prone to Superstition; and entertains very greedily such Maxims and Observations as have a face of Piety and Justice, and close with the



Fondness of natural Affections, though in truth there be no good Reason at the Bottom, if well examined: And then, when a Man falls into any Misfortunes, (as there are few who do not, and have not their Lives more than chequered with them) the Eyes of People are upon him; and if he be before marked out by any of these Rules, and in a Condition capable of having them applied to him, his Misfortunes shall undoubtedly be ascribed to his Condition, and be called the Effects of God's Judgments due to him upon such Accounts, and for such Reasons. A very false, and hazardous, uncharitable Way of judging.

This is what I thought convenient to say upon the matter of Peoples disinheriting and rejecting their Children, who are yet obliged, by the Christian Religion, to make all due and fitting Provision for them: These are the Reasons that justify the Parents in casting them off, and dispence with all their Obligations; and whatever Parent will act arbitrarily, and without them, will never be able to be at quiet in his own Mind, or perform the Duty he owes to his Children; he must needs be self-condemned, *and, with St. Paul, worse than an Infidel.*

I will make an End of this Subject, when I have made this one Observation more; that the Parents, who consume their whole Estate, with which they should provide for their Children, in Gaming, Drinking, Riot, Luxury, and sinful Pleasures, are in no better Condition, nor do any better discharge their Duty to their Children, than they, who, for little or no Cause, Anger, Folly, or Humour, disinherit their Children, and cut them off from their Estates. There is, indeed, great Difference betwixt the *Minds* and Affections of these two Sorts of Parents, but the *Effect* to the Children is the same: And since the Commands of God to Parents, to make Provision for the Children, are given for the Childrens sakes; if these Commands take not Effect, it is all one to *them* what it is that hinders it: They are full as destitute and helpless by their Parents Neglect, as they could be by their Displeasure; and they become as miserable when the Parents Luxury and Vice deprive them of their Maintenance, as when they are disinherited through causeless Anger, and by false Suggestions. And a Parent, who is thus abused into the wronging of his Children, is much more innocent and pitiable, than he who riotously, vainly, and viciously spends the Estate that might and should contribute to his Childrens Sustainance and Welfare; because this Man does willingly deprive himself of the Means of doing his Duty: And the other, who is abused, is under a Force and Constraint, acting reasonably to himself, though mistaken through the Faults of other People. And therefore, these luxurious foolish Spenders, when they come to die, or are by Misery reduced before-hand to consider, cannot satisfy themselves with knowing, and remembring, that they never had any Thought or Intention to wrong their Children, but loved them infinitely, and wished them all the Happiness imaginable: They cannot satisfy themselves with this, whilst, through their Folly, and their Negligence, they see those Children miserable, that might and should have been provided for: And it is not enough for them to grieve, as they will naturally do, at the Misfortunes of their Children; but they ought to repent, and ask God's Pardon, for they have trespassed against him, by the Neglect of their Duty; for that, I have shewed you, is the Way which the Christian Religion takes to make all People in the World happy: It binds the natural and civil Duties upon all related and concerned, with strong and strict Commands of God, under severe Penalties, and huge Rewards; so that whatever Christian now neglects the Performance of them, he shall not only be accounted heedless, ill advised, and unnatural; but highly sinful and provoking, and shall, without Repentance, be severely punished. He is esteemed to deny the Faith, and to be worse than an Infidel: And therefore it will be more tolerable for them in the Day of Judgment, than for him.

DISCOURSE



## DISCOURSE VII.

## I PETER III. VERSES 1, 2.

*Ye Wives, be in Subjection to your own Husbands; that if any obey not the Word, they also may, without the Word, be won by the Conversation of the Wives: While they behold their chaste Conversation coupled with Fear.*

THE Scripture does, in a great many Places, lay most exprefs Commands on Wives, to live in Subjection to their Husbands; but I choose, in treating of this Duty, to speak to this Passage in *St. Peter*, because it contains not only the *Command*; but one of the good *Effects* of such *Submission*, which is a great Encouragement to the fulfilling it; for when a Law carries its Reason with it, it is more likely to find a good Acceptance and Compliance, especially with quick and disputing People, than when it comes armed only with its own Authority and Power. The Command in the Text is *to Wives, to be in Subjection to their Husbands*. The Encouragement to Obedience is the great Likelihood of good Effects to follow, the winning over the unbelieving Husband; *that if any obey not the Word, they may, without the Word, be won by the Conversation of the Wife*: Which Conversation is to be *chaste*, and *with Fear*; *while they behold their chaste Conversation coupled with Fear*. Which last Words, (as also the three Verses following) are either an Explanation of what it is, *to be in Subjection to Husbands*; or a Description of such Qualifications as will make a very good Wife to her Husband, and acceptable to God; and will therefore come, in Time, to be considered at large. In the mean Time, let us see a little, in the first Place, to the Command; *Wives, be in Subjection to your own Husbands*.

It is impossible for any Company of People to subsist any while together, without a Subordination of one to the other. Where all will command, none will obey; and then there will be nothing done but Mischiefe. We see, when People meet, who have no Pretensions one upon another, they are fain to agree among themselves to allow a Preference, and some kind of Superiority to some of the Company, that Business may be done; they govern themselves either by known established Rules and Customs of Honour and Ceremony, or else they consider Age, Capacity, or Experience: Something or other there is, that determines their Choice, because they find it absolutely necessary to silence the Pretences of every Man, by preferring some or other, that they may obtain the End of their assembling. Even among Friends and Equals, where the least Pretence to *Pre-eminence* would dissolve the Friendship, and break up all the Intercourse, yet is there a Necessity that one should yield it to the other; and so they do, to make the Conversation useful: And the longer People are to live together, the greater is the Necessity of Subordination and Subjection one to another; because there will unavoidably rise still more and more Occasions of Division and Difference, which will require the greater Unity: Now there can be no such thing as Unity, where two Parties contend for, or pretend to superiority, or such Equality as will not yield. All this is evident in Kingdoms, Provinces, Cities, and private Corporations, either great or little. And this should help



help to convince the Wives, who are now going to make up a Family, that there is an absolute Necessity of Government, which supposes Subjection some where or other: They must needs see, that every Family (the Original, indeed, and Model of Bodies Corporate, Cities, and Commonwealths) must have its proper Superiour, whom all the rest must needs obey.

And when they are convinced of this great Article, the next Enquiry is to be, whether this Superiority, that is so unavoidably necessary to the Support of Rule and Order, is well and rightly placed in *Husbands*, rather than in *Wives*: And for this, they are to consider; 1<sup>st</sup>. Where Nature has designed this Sovereignty: 2<sup>dly</sup>. Where Use and Custom have placed it: And, lastly, what the Laws of God say to the Matter. 1<sup>st</sup>. They are to consider where *Nature* has designed this Sovereignty: And that we may well presume to be, where she has given the greatest Strength and Abilities; where she has made the Body and the Mind fittest to undergo the Toils and Labours that are absolutely necessary to the Being and Well-being of the World; to the carrying on Business at home, and Trade abroad; to the defending one's Country from foreign Foes, and to the administering Justice to one another: Now where we perceive Nature has best qualified her Creatures for Performance of these Functions, that are so necessary, that the World cannot subsist in Peace and Order without them, we may very safely conclude she designed to place the Superiority. Now, whether Women have naturally Strength and Abilities of Body and Mind to go through these Things, if Men should for a while neglect them, need not be questioned: It is demonstrably certain that they have not; and if they have not, who should do them but Men, whom Nature hath fitted for it? And in as much as Nature hath made Men necessary for these Works, she hath made them superior to such as are not able to do them; for where People are in other Respects equal, Strength of Body and Capacity of Mind will undoubtedly make them Superiour. We find it is so in all the Creatures of the World besides. And though there are a great many Instances of the contrary, yet they will never avail to the overthrowing the visible Design of Nature: Though there be many Women superiour to many Men in Strength of Body, and Abilities of Mind, in Fineness of Parts, Greatness of Capacity, Soundness of Judgment, and Strength and Faithfulness of Memory; yet the Number of such neither is, nor ever was, nor ever will be, great enough to shew, that Nature intended to give that Sex the Superiority over the Men: And though Use and Education might make some Alteration in the Case, yet all the Use and Education in the World would never fit them for the Performances of the great Businesses, above-mentioned, of Trade and Merchandize, and making Wars abroad, and executing Justice at home: The Abilities of managing which, are evident Indications of Nature's intending to make the Men superiour to the Women.

And, agreeable to this manifest Design of Nature, have been the Usages and Customs of all Countries in the World, at all times; which was the *second thing* to be enquired after. These indeed have been so much to the Disadvantage of that Sex, that, without all doubt, they have done it manifest Injury, and have not had so great Regard to it, as in all Reason and Sense they ought to have had: So far from disputing the *Priority* with them, that they have placed them but a little above their Slaves, or menial Servants, contrary to reason and decency, and the Design of Nature, who intended them for Friends and Companions in all their Fortunes. Even the Nations, that have been accounted wisest and most civilized, have yet allowed them to be only made for the Solace of Mankind, the Care of some domestick Matters, and the Continuance of the World, and would let them bear no other Part in it; so that the Searches after the Usages and Customs of all Times, will be but short, and do them little Service.

They



They have only, in the Third and last Place, to enquire, what help Religion and the Laws of God afford, the Sanctuary of all the Weak, and which provide Security against Oppression and Injustice. When St. Paul is giving Rules to the Women, 1. Tim. ii. he says, amongst other Things, v. 11, 12. *Let the Women learn in silence, with all Subjection: But I suffer not a Woman to teach, (i. e. in publick) nor to usurp Authority over the Man, but to be in Silence:* And then subjoins these Reasons, *For Adam was first formed, then Eve: And Adam was not deceived, (i. e. first) but the Woman being deceived, was (first,) in the Transgression.* From whence it appears, that he makes the Creation or Formation of *Eve* after *Adam*, to be one Reason of her Subjection: And this Reason would have held good, if both had continued innocent, for it was a Reason before they transgressed; and therefore St. Paul urges the Subjection of all Women to their Husbands, upon that Account, because the first of Men was before the first of Women. But the second Reason of the Woman's Subjection, is fetched from *Eve's* being first in the Transgression: She was deceived first, and then deceived her Husband; she was undone by disobeying God, and *he* undone by following her; she must therefore Rule no more: It was Part of her Curse and Punishment, that her Desire should be to her Husband, or subject to her Husband, and he should Rule over her. Well, but how could this Subjection of the Woman to her Husband be a Part of the Curse and Punishment for her Transgression, when it is plain she was to be in Subjection, even in Paradise, and State of Innocence, by vertue of *Adam's* being first formed, and then *Eve*? which is St. Paul's Argument. To reconcile these Things, we must know, that Subjection in Paradise would have been no Task or Burthen; it would have been more easy and delightful to obey in that State, than it can be now to command: It would not indeed have been Obedience, but the doing all they liked and loved themselves: Man would have then had no Folly, Vanity, Pride, Self-conceit or Ill-nature, from whence proceed all idle, harsh, ungrateful, and imperious Orders: But all his Thoughts, Words and Designs, would have been wise and reasonable, just and kind, regular and orderly, so that the Execution of them would have been most easy and delightful; they would have carried their Conviction along with them; they would have all appeared so useful, so becoming, and so necessary to their Good, that Women would have hastned, with great Pleasure, to perform them: They would *themselves* also have wanted that extraordinary good Opinion of their Worth and Abilities, which makes them frequently perverse and disputatious, when any thing is enjoined them; and consequently, would not have found that Rising and Resistency within, which now they do: In a Word, all things else, as well as themselves, would have been much otherwise than now they are; and therefore *Subjection* would have been no Burthen to the *Women*, nor the *Command* have given any great Authority to the *Men*. To make Subjection therefore Part of the *Curse*, and Punishment affixed to *Eve*, and her Posterity of the same Sex; it must needs be, that Subjection should be in things difficult and unacceptable, against their Will and Desire, a Subjection to many vain and idle, to many froward and unkind, to many injurious and austere Commands, which the foolish, severe, imperious Humours of the Husbands lay upon them. *To have their Desire to their Husbands*, signifies here, *to be subject to their Wills*. You shall not be Mistress of your self, nor have any Desire satisfied, but what is approved of by your Husband; you shall be wholly under his Power and Tutelage, he shall command you many Things that you dislike, and yet you shall obey: As unreasonable and extravagant as his Desire shall often appear to you, yet it shall govern you; and you shall have no other to take Place, but when he finds it fit to yield it to you.



It is impossible to make less of a Punishment and Curse, than this; and since St. Paul founds this unacceptable Subjection of the Wives to their Husbands, upon this Place in *Genesis*, wherein God lays it on them as a Punishment for *Eve's* being first in the Transgression, it is impossible any way to avoid it; and as manifest it is, that so it has been commanded by God, from the Beginning of the World. This Subjection is not therefore founded *only* on the Power and Strength and superiour Abilities, with which it pleased God to endue Men, above the Women; nor on the Usages and Customs of the World, (which Power and Strength will always have upon their Side) but most especially on *God's Commands*, laying it as a Punishment on the Sex, for the forward Transgression of their first Mother; and that it might not be evaded, as a *Curse* and *Punishment*, which all People may avoid as much as they can, the same Thing is commanded over and over again in the *New Testament*, as in *Coloss.* iii. 18. *Wives, submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as it is fit, in the Lord.* So in *Eph.* v. 22. *Wives, submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord; for the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church;* and concludes, *let the Wife see that she reverence her Husband:* And so in many other places, as well as in the Text. But because *to be in Subjection*, is a Phrase of indefinite and uncertain Sense, since all Inferiours are commanded to be *subject* to the highest Powers, and Children to their Parents, and Servants to their Masters, and Men to one another, as well as Wives to their Husbands; it will be needful for them to know, in what Particulars the Wives must be in Subjection to their Husbands; for a Subject cannot obey his King, a Son his Father, nor a Servant his Master, *in all Things*; but each Superiour has his proper and peculiar Sway, and each Inferiour has a limited Subjection: There is something that sets out the Bounds of every one's Power, and every one's Obedience, and the Transgressors of them become on one side Tyrants and Usurpers, and on the other disobedient Rebels: And so it is with Wives and Husbands; the one may exercise a Power that belongs not to them; and the other refuse Submission where it is due, and should be paid. It is therefore certain, that a Wife owes no Subjection to her Husband, against the Laws of either God, or Man: Religion and good Morals claim the first place in her Obedience; and though, I think, the Laws, or rather Customs, of the Land are very tender to Women offending in the Company of their Husbands, as presuming them under Command and some kind of Constraint from them, yet Religion has no such Consideration, but includes them all under Sin, who commit any sinful Actions; and no Command or Example of a Husband will excuse a Wife offending against a known Law of God, or doing any thing immoral. She owes him no Subjection in such Matters; he is himself a Rebel to their common Lord and Master, whilst commanding any such unlawful Action. But in other Matters common and indifferent, their Disobedience will be faulty, where Reason, and Discretion, allowed of Custom, Decency, and good Fame, will not make their Excuse. Where Men's Commands are evidently unreasonable, shamefully indiscreet, unusual and unheard of, infamous, or unbecoming their Age, their Credit, Quality and Condition, they may be safely passed by; *omitted*, rather *than neglected* or *despised*: And because it will be asked, who shall be Judges in such Case; the Wives must take good Care, that the Commands which they comply not with, may be such as will justify them to any wise impartial People; so that, who *will* be Judges, they may reasonably excuse their Non-compliance, and condemn the Men that gave such Orders: It will not be enough for Wives to oppose *their* Wills to the Wills of their Husbands, nor Reasons to Reasons, unless apparently unequal; because, in both these Cases, they do evidently contend for Mastery; for if the Will and Reason of one be equal to the other's, it is something besides that must determine who shall yield; and then we must recur to what hath been before said, to know who is Superiour.

The



The Truth of it is, the People, who ought to consider these Things best, are they who never trouble their Heads about them; so far from enquiring where, and when they must obey, and in what Cases they are at Liberty, that they are evermore at Liberty, and never are in Subjection at all, though in the most reasonable and handsome Cases that are; but forget their Duty and their Sex together. They consider not Subjection and Submission, in these Instances, as concerned in Religion or Conscience at all; as if they were not commanded by God as certainly, as Obedience of Subjects to their Princes, of Children to their Parents, and Servants to their Masters: Subjection, in all these, looks like religious, and relating to the Conscience, and obliging those concerned by virtue of God's Command; and why the being in Subjection to their Husbands should not concern the Consciences of Wives as much, they will never be able to give a Reason: I have already shewed them, that the Laws of God do positively charge it on them.

But because *Subjection*, in this Place and Argument, does not only signify bare Submission to the Will and Pleasure of Husbands, but includes also other Qualifications, such as may make them acceptable both to God, and Men; they also are to come into Consideration, when we are treating of the Duty of Wives: And the first that is here mentioned, is a *chast Conversation coupled with Fear*. By *Conversation*, is understood the whole course and way of Living, all the exterior Management and Behaviour; and therefore a *chast Conversation* requires not only the Purity and Cleanness of the Heart, but such an outward, innocent and decent Carriage, as may denote that inward Purity: It is what the Husband may see, because he is to be won by it, and gained over, and it is said to be *coupled with Fear*; because the Fear of God is the surest Preservative of Chastity in *the Heart*; and the Fear of Man, of Laws, of Infamy and Shame, and ill Report, the great Security of a chast and honourable Conversation *without*. There is no need of saying much in Commendation of this great Virtue to Wives; they cannot choose but know, that, without it, they are Wives no longer; the Band of Wedlock is immediately dissolved before God; and before Man, as soon as the Husband pleases to ask the Assistance of the Law: But this is not without the Breach of the most solemn and tremendous Vow and Promise that can be thought on; the Guilt of such a Perjury, as cannot ever be atoned for in this World, and of such horrible Injustice, as can never be repaired, either to Husband, or to Children. In other Cases, a Perjury may take away a Man's good Name, or his Estate; but there may be some amends made him for both of them, by Repentance: His good Name may be recovered by a Recantation and Denial of what was sworn to his Prejudice; and his Estate may come again, by force of Law, or voluntary Surrender. If the Life of a Father be taken away by Perjury and Injustice, some Compensation may be after made to his unhappy Children. But the Perjury and Injustice of an Adulterous Wife, are such Offences, as can receive no Reparation or Amendment; even a Confession of their Crime to the injured Party, may make him yet more miserable, and do him farther Injury; and, as for Satisfaction, it is not in their Power. How strangely hard is it, for such to make a good and true Repentance; how long and bitter should their Sorrow and Compunction be before God, since they have so disabled themselves, from doing any thing besides? Sure, by their flexible and tender Constitution, and these Considerations, no People in the World can Sin, with such a sensible and painful Self-conviction, as false Wives: And therefore, there is the less need of enlarging any farther on this first Instance of Subjection to Husbands: The Matter is so plain and reasonable, so just and honest, that they, who will not be subject in this Point, will not (need not, I think) regard the being so in any other.

But



But it is not refraining from adulterous Practice only, that is enough to denominate a *Conversation chaste*: The outward Carriage must be also honest and inoffensive, void of *Suspicion* as well as *Blame*: And this it will be, if it be *coupled with Fear*, i. e. tender Regard of Reputation and good Fame, as well as Fear of offending the Husband: They must *provide Things honest, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of Men*. The Scriptures do not only call on People to secure their Hearts to God, but are exceeding careful to urge them to set forth a good Example to all the World of Standers by: They are *by their good Works to glorify their Father, who is in Heaven*; they must not only *be acceptable to God, but approved of Men*. *I will praise the Lord with my whole Heart, secretly among the Faithful, and in the midst of the Congregation*, saith the Psalmist. So St. Paul exhorts the *Thessalonians* and *Philippians* to several Christian Duties, and good Works, *that the Name of the Lord Jesus might be glorified in them*. And so St. Peter would have the Christians have *their Conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they might, by their good Works, which they should behold, glorify God in the Day of Visitation*. So in other Places, *We are to adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all Things; to have our Conversation worthy of the Gospel; and to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called, and as becometh Saints; to give no offence in any thing, that the Ministry, i. e. the Gospel Dispensation, be not blamed. Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all Honour; that the Name of God, and his Doctrine be not blasphemed*: And more nearly to the purpose of the Text, Tit. ii. 5. *Let Women be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed*. And again, *I will that younger Women marry, and keep the House, give no occasion to the Adversary, i. e. to any Enemies of the Christian Religion, to speak reproachfully*; that is, to reproach the Holy Religion; as though, after all its good Lessons, in all respects, Men lived no better than they did before, the Servants were no better Servants, nor the Women better Wives, than they were before they were converted, which were much to the Disgrace of Christianity. So that it is not, truly, enough for a Christian to be indeed virtuous and good, if he do not also appear so; because a good Example is of great use, not only to silence the Reproaches, Obloquies, and Blasphemies, or evil Speakings, of foolish, ignorant or malicious People, who, for appearing visible Miscarriages in Management, are ready to charge Religion as a useless insignificant thing, but for the good Effect and Influence it has upon all that take Notice of it; for as a bad Example turns to the Discredit and Reproach of the Profession, so does a good one to its Honour and Advantage, and gains insensibly upon the most obdurate Minds.

And that is (in the *second Place*) one of the Motives and Encouragements St. Peter propounds to the Wives, to live in a holy, careful, and religious Subjection to their Husbands; *that if any obey not the Word, they also may, without the Word, be won by the Conversation of the Wives, whilst they behold their chaste Conversation coupled with Fear*. It is much the same Advice with what St. Paul gives, 1 Cor. vii. that if an Unbeliever, either Woman or Man, were married to a Believer, the Christian should not think of parting upon that score; but stay the rather, to win, by a kind, good-natured Christian Conversation, the unbelieving Party over to the Faith; *How knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband; or thou O Man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?* ver. 16. They both of them suppose, that a virtuous, sober, and religious Example, may be likely to prevail, when the Word of God it self, from the Mouth of a Preacher, is of no force or value: And great indeed is the Power of a good Example, well managed, especially where it is always present, as, in the Case before us, is supposed; it is an Argument that is always operating some Way or other, a Man cannot help attending to it: He sees, for instance, his Wife, by virtue of the Christian Doctrine, leading a sober, chaste, religious Life,

setting



setting the Fear of God continually before her Eyes, and practising the Commands of Christ, not only abstaining from Adultery, and open Falshood and Abomination, which the Laws, and Vengeance of her injured Partner might severely punish; but also from all Appearance of Evil, out of the Reach of all Suspicion, guided in all her Words and Actions by the Rules of a strict and severe Virtue; so careful of fulfilling his Desires, and satisfying to her Duty in all Particulars; and living in such a handsome free Subjection to his Will; that 'tis impossible he should not have some liking to the Religion and good Principles that influence her to such Obedience and such Virtue: He sees the Power of Christianity in such desirable Effects, that he will certainly conclude, it is a useful and most holy Dispensation, a Religion honourable for God, and serviceable to Mankind.

And there is nothing sooner likely to convert a Man to a Religion; than seeing it very fit to be a Religion, by its Principles, and finding those Principles operative and effectual to the producing what it aims at. Such an Example will perpetually reproach and disturb him, and give him no Peace, till he comply with it; it is a powerful Method in the Hands and Management of a prudent Woman, and will prevail sooner than all the same Reasons of Religion together, ranged into Order, with the Noise of Opposition and Dispute.

And if a sober, chaste, religious Conversation, *coupled with Fear*, i. e. with a becoming Carefulness of not offending, and a familiar, easy, free Submission, be the most likely Method of converting an unbelieving Husband to the Faith of Christ; there is a great deal of Probability, that the same wise and good Courses will also obtain, to the winning over Husbands, who are already Christians, from many idle or sinful Practices, and curing them of many foolish and perverse Humours; which may also be a Motive and Encouragement to such a Subjection as the Apostle prescribes, although the Women have not unbelieving Husbands, *i. e.* such as are not Christians in Profession. Unless a Man be brutalized to a great degree, and in a manner forsaken of God, and left entirely to himself, the meek and quiet, chaste and sober Conversation of his Wife will win and gain upon him. Few Men but have their times of thinking and considering; and when they shall remember and reflect upon the Carriage and Conversation of their Wives, and find, that, instead of falsifying their Vows of Faith and Chastity, they have most carefully and religiously observed them; not made them such Requitals as their Perjury and Falshood, according to the Maxims of the World, required and called for, and would justify; but have been wary to a Scruple, managed themselves so nicely, virtuously and well, that they have given them neither secret Jealousy within, nor Shame and Infamy abroad, and born their sensible and wounding Injuries, to the Eye of the World, as though they had been treated honestly and kindly: A Man must be of a horribly hard, inflexible Ill-nature, whom such Reflection will not soften into Love and Pity; the Remembrance of such Kindness, and good Qualities, and such a Conversation, is as likely to effect a Cure, and to reduce a wandering Husband, as any thing besides: He will see and admire the Power of Virtue and Religion, and the huge Difference betwixt the Choice his virtuous and deliberate Love made, and that which his impetuous sinful Passion since has thrown him on: How frugal, serviceable, and creditable the *one* has been, and how extravagant, expensive, mischievous and shameful the *other*: How deep a Debtor the Allurements of one have made him to God's Justice, and to what Despair and Misery they have reduced him, whilst the Prayers, and Tears, and Intercession of the other may have preserved him for Repentance and Forgiveness. This may not only fill him with good *Idea's* of Religion, but prove a Motive to his Conversion; it may turn his Heart, and bring him to the Ways of Goodness; he may see how reasonable it is, that *he* should be as faithful



to his Vows, and true to his Engagements, for the future, as she has been; and, in a generous and religious Gratitude, may set about a Reformation, and redeem his past Miscarriages by After-constancy and Kindness.

It is not indeed certain, that these, or any other Methods, will reclaim a vicious and a faithless Husband; but it is certain, that these are the most likely to do it, and best fitted for it; but at least that every Woman is obliged to take these Courses, whether they prove effectual or no: It is that which they both first, and last, and all the while, must practise, and with which no evil, false, injurious Usage can dispence: There must be no Requital in these sinful Instances, *one's Sin* will never make excuse for *another's*; and 'twere a sad Revenge that would fall, at last, upon their own Souls. They must still persist in the Performance of their Duties towards God and Man; if their chaste and religious Conversation prevail, they have gained their Point, and proved the Instruments of the greatest good in the World, to those they love the best, and to whom they owe it most: And if they prevail *not*, they have the Satisfaction of knowing they have done their Duty all the while; and taken the Courses that were likeliest to effect what they desired and wanted; they are excusable both to God and Man, and shall not fail of their Reward. Whereas, by a light and idle, wanton and suspicious Carriage, they do not only give offence to sober, virtuous People, and great Encouragement to vicious impudent Attempters; but do Religion great Mischief, weaken it much in the Minds of their ill-disposed Partners, who see it has not any of its boasted Power and Efficacy, and strangely alienates their Affections from them, and hardens them in their unlawful Practices: For the most desperately vicious and ungodly Husbands in the World would have their Wives even scrupulously virtuous, and religious, and make the Want of those good Qualities and Graces, Pretences for their holding out themselves against them; and therefore Wives are inexcusable that will not try so to reclaim them, especially when 'tis their Duty so to do, let the Event be what it will. This is the first, and greatest Instance of that Subjection which every Wife must live in to her Husband; and we see that it is not without its Encouragement, even in this Life, namely, the Likelihood of reclaiming him to Faithfulness and Constancy, which bring their Reward with them.

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## DISCOURSE VIII.

I PETER III. VERSES 3, 4.

*Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the Hair, and of wearing of Gold; or of putting on of Apparel: But let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the sight of God of great Price.*

**S**T. Peter, designing to make all Women as good Wives, and good Christians, as they ought to be, lays down this general Rule, in the first Place, that *they must be in Subjection to their own Husbands*: The Reasonableness and Necessity of which, I have tried to shew, 1<sup>st</sup>. From the visible Design of Nature, which hath denied to *them*, and given to *Men*, the Strength and Abilities of



of Body and Mind, which are absolutely requisite to carry on the necessary Business of the World. 2dly, From the Usages and Customs of the World, at all Times, which have rather been to their Prejudice than Advantage. And, 3dly, From the many Commands of God to the contrary, in holy Scriptures. And then he descends to particular Injunctions, in order to the same good End, of rendering them acceptable to God, and to their Husbands: One, and a very great one, was, *to have their Conversation chaste, and coupled with Fear; i.e.* not only pure and clean Hearts, but a discreet Reservedness, and modest Carriage outwardly; a careful nice Regard to Fame and good Report; such a sober, virtuous and prudent Management, as will denote the Fear of God within, and that the Mind is governed by good Principles, and influenced by the Laws of Christianity; so that they, who behold this chaste and good Conversation, shall glorify God; and the Husband, if there be need, shall be won and gained upon by it, to the Conversion of his Soul, the Reformation of his Manners, and Increase of Virtue. He is now proceeding to lay down other Rules and Instructions; such as will very much forward his Design of making the Women good Wives, and good Christians. *First*, Negatively, by shewing them, that the Ways of the World were not such as he would advise, or thought fit either to commend them to God, or their Husbands: *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the Hair, and of wearing of Gold, or of putting on of Apparel.* But, *Secondly*, Affirmatively, he shews them what it is he would advise, and why: *But let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the sight of God of great Price.* I am, *first*, to speak to his Advice, which is negative, relating to the outward adorning of the Body: And it is very near the same with what St. Paul delivers, 1 Tim. ii. Verses 9, 10. *In like manner also, that Women adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefacedness and Sobriety; not with broidered Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Array; but (which becometh Women professing Godliness) with good Works.* St. Chrysostom understands these Words, as if St. Paul were directing the Women how to appear in Publick, when they came to Church, and not to be giving any Rules of habiting themselves in general; and therefore he enlarges on them in this manner: *Do you (saith he) come to pray to God, cloathed in Gold and with Embroideries? Are you not rather come to dance, or to make up the Number at a Wedding, or to see some fine Sight? There your Gold, there your Embroideries, there your plaited Hair, and there your costly Apparel, may be seasonable: But here, at Church there is no need or use of any such Things: You are come hither to intreat and supplicate for Pardon of your Sins, and intercede for your Offences; to address to God, and render him propitious to you, and do you then adorn your self? Are these the Tokens, this the Habit of a Supplicant? How can you sigh, or weep, or pray with Fervency, whilst thus arrayed? It will but look like Acting and Hypocrisy; for such Attire and Sorrow suit but ill together.* With a great deal more to the like Purpose, suited very well to the Customs of his own Times, and, it may be, to the *Lent-season* in particular. But since the Usages of Christian Countries have long while been otherwise, and that putting on the best Apparel was designed to do some Honour to the Lord's-Day, and that it might be observed with all the *external* Tokens of Respect, as well as with the *internal* Honour and Esteem, and Worship of the Mind; it is not only as lawful to be cloathed with the most ornamental Attire on this, as on any other Day; but it would be an idle, weak Perverseness to change or oppose the Custom. And whatever St. Paul's Advice might refer to, there is no Reason to think St. Peter, in the Words of the Text, had any eye to the Women's habiting themselves particularly on *Sundays*, or at the Publick Service of God, otherwise than on other Days in other Places.

But



But because these two are the only remarkable Passages in the New Testament, that say any thing concerning the Habit of Christian Women; and upon which *they*, who amongst us affect a notorious Plainness and Simplicity of Apparel, ground and approve their Practice, and may be tempted to condemn the rest of the World of Pride and sinful Vanity, and of living in Contradiction to the Advice of St. *Paul* and St. *Peter* in the Text; it may not be amiss to join them together, in considering this Matter: And to shew, *First*, what is *not* the Meaning of them: And, *Secondly*, what *is*.

*First*, What is *not* to be understood by these Words: And that is, that neither St. *Peter*, nor St. *Paul*, are to be understood in the gross and literal Sense, as utterly forbidding the Women to wear any Gold about them; either in Ear-rings, or about their Cloaths; either in Lace, or interwoven or embroidered; and all plaiting of Hair; all Pearls and Jewels, Necklaces, or Bracelets; and all sorts of Cloaths, either Linen, Silk, or Woollen, that come to a great deal of Money, and are *costly*: They are not to be understood in the strict and literal Sense, for these Reasons: *1st*. The Nature of the Thing requires it not: Nor, *2dly*, the Way and Manner of Expression: Nor, *3dly*, the End and Design of the Apostles: And yet, the Patrons of this great Simplicity of Habit, whilst they ground their Practice and Opinion of its Necessity upon these single Passages, taken in the literal Sense, will not be able to excuse themselves from contradicting the Apostles, if either the Linen, Silk, or Woollen, which they wear, cost considerably; for they are as much forbidden *costly Apparel*, as Gold, and Pearls, and broidering of the Hair, by these Apostles: And fine Linen and fine Woollen are equally *costly*, with relation *to*, and in comparison *of*, coarse Linen and coarse Woollen, as Gold and Pearls are, with relation to fine Linen and fine Woollen, in their several degrees.

Not that these People are blameable, in any wise, for this their Plainness of Attire, (for Men and Women are entirely at their Liberty to habit themselves as plainly as they please) but that they ought not to ground the *Necessity* of doing so upon these Texts; and much less ought they to accuse and *condemn* of Pride, and sinful Vanity, such as go, to appearance, in more gay and costly Cloathing: If they avoid these two Offences, the Necessity of going so plain themselves arising from the Scriptures, and the condemning of others who do not so attire themselves, they may do as they see fit in this Matter: And though the mistaking these Scriptures will, of itself, do them no harm, yet the censuring other People *will*; and that does so easily follow from mistaking the Scriptures, that it were better they would thoroughly consider them; and then they would find, that neither they themselves *do*, nor any else *can*, conform in Practice to the literal Sense of the Words of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*.

But since I am not speaking to *them*, but to such as understand them better; and yet (I hope) are full as good Wives, and much truer Christians: I will now go on to shew, that these Advices and Instructions are not to be literally understood. And, *First*, the Nature of the thing requires it not; no Body can discern any greater Danger and Malignance in Gold and costly Apparel, than in any other Metal, other Stones, or coarser Garments. Whether it be the Wisdom, or Folly, or the Fancy of People, that has set a greater Value on these things than on others, is no matter; there is certainly no greater *Evil* in one than another; they are all, in their own Natures, alike innocent: And though they prove sometimes the *Occasions* of great Mischiefs, yet they are never properly the *Causes* of them; but the Passions and Desires of People towards them, who, to compass them, will take Courses which must consequently produce mischievous Effects. They are, in this Case, not unlike to good Countries that border on the Kingdoms of two mighty Princes,



Princes, who, finding their Convenience, fall to Wars about them, although the Countries gave no Provocation or Encouragement to either. If the Weight, or Lustre, or their Rarity, give these things any extraordinary Excellence above others, the Delight and Pleasure People take therein is but reasonable; and whatever Evils follow thence, are by no Means chargeable upon those inanimate things themselves, but on the Men that cause them: And these things naturally are no worse than Light and Lustre in the Sun, Shape and Comeliness in a Tree, or Beauty, Fragrance, and Variety of Form and Colour, in the Flowers and Herbs; they are all of them God's Creatures, and consequently good.

But supposing they acquire their Value and Esteem from the Opinion of the World, and Peoples Fancies, and that this be ill-grounded, and run out into a blameable Excess; yet it is not reasonable to think that they are all of them absolutely prohibited, because Men entertain false Notions of, and are deceived in them: For, *first*, Men have as much true Reason to value *these*, as any other material things whatever: If we can judge of Beauty, or of Usefulness, they are as useful and as beautiful, as any other Parts of God's Creation. But whatever they are in themselves, and however Men may be mistaken in their Judgments of them; yet as the World was formerly, is now, and always will be ordered, it is absolutely necessary that some things should be accounted of greater Excellence and Value than others: There could be otherwise no living in the World; no Trade or Commerce could be entertained, without such Change and Bargain. And if the Wisdom of all the World, in all Ages, has centred in this, that such and such things should be accounted best, and valued highest, it is a great Presumption that they *are* truly the most excellent and valuable things of the Creation; but it is a downright Demonstration, that it is necessary to *account* them so: And that such Opinion is well enough grounded, because it is absolutely necessary that something should be reckoned *best*, and better than another; and nothing has, at any time, prevailed above these things, in civilized Countries.

And though it should be objected, That the *Indians* parted with their Gold and Pearls, for Glass and Trifles, to their first *Discoverers*; yet it would not from thence follow, that what the common Esteem of Mankind makes valuable, is not truly so: For though Glass and Gold are of equal Value to a Man that neither uses, nor knows how to make use of either, yet to one that does both, they are very unequal; And when the *Indians* knew how much their Traders valued Gold, and what a deal of Glass, and other gaudy Things were purchasable by a little Gold, they grew wiser, and learned the Excellency of it; though, at the same time, we must own, that if all the World should set a Stamp of Value upon Glass, or any Thing besides, it must be as valuable as Gold itself: Which shews, that these Things are not here forbidden by St. *Peter* or St. *Paul*, either because they are worthless in their own Nature, or because *we* have set too great a Value on them: They are as good and innocent as any other Things: and therefore there is nothing in the Nature of them, from whence we may conclude they are absolutely prohibited.

Nor, *Secondly*, from the Way and Manner of Expression here used, although it seem to be absolutely negative; for so it is in a World of Places in the Scriptures: So *Matth. vi. 19. Lay not up for your selves Treasures upon the Earth, where Moth and Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break through and steal; but lay up for your selves Treasures in Heaven.* Here, though the Expression be very positive, or absolutely negative; yet the Meaning of these Words is not absolutely to prohibit People the laying up Treasures here on Earth, for the Necessities and Duties of Life do make it unavoidable: There can be no Provision made for Families and Children, without such treasuring; there can be no such Thing as Stock, or Substance; no



such Thing as Trade and Commerce, unless some People do it to be ready at an Exigence: And unless we can imagine Christ intended to forbid the Merchandize and Traffick of the World, or the Provisions for Families and Relations, we must not think he absolutely prohibited the laying up Treasures here on Earth, although the Injunction be expressed in very absolute and positive Terms. But the Meaning is, that Christians should be more intent upon the securing everlasting Happiness to themselves, than the short and perishable Riches of this World: That they should not lay out so much Time and Care, and Pains in gathering Treasures here, that are subject to so many Changes, and of which they can at best be Masters but a very little time, to the Neglect of Heavenly Things; in whose Possession there is not only everlasting Happiness, but in whose Loss there is eternal Misery: There is no manner of Comparison betwixt these two Treasures; and therefore lay not up the one, until you have secured the other. And so St. *Matth.* ix. 13. *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.* Which, being spoken by God under the *Jewish* Dispensation, cannot be understood of God's absolutely refusing and disliking Sacrifices, which he himself so frequently commanded, in the Law of *Moses*, to be offered constantly and solemnly before, and to him: But the Meaning is, I will have Mercy *rather* than Sacrifice, if they should come in Competition; I will not be defrauded of one, under Pretence of the other; I will have them both in their proper Seasons: But should there be an Occasion of Preference, the shewing Mercy is more agreeable to Me than Sacrifice; I like the fulfilling of that Command of mine, which does an Act of Love and Kindness to another, better than fulfilling that Command which only shews an Instance of Obedience to Me, and has no other Good belonging to it. And so it is in *Hosea* vi. 6. from whence it is taken; *I desired Mercy, not Sacrifice; and the Knowledge of God, more than Burnt-offerings;* where *not*, in the first Place, is explained by *more* in the *second*. And so our Saviour understands it in the Application, for *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* They had objected to him, his eating and conversing with Publicans and Sinners; and he tells them, that his chief Design was to convert all such from the Evil of their Ways; that his Errand was rather to them than others; they wanted his Assistance most, and therefore they should have it: Not but that he came to call those he names Righteous, as well as those whom they called Sinners; for there were no such People as Righteous, for all Men wanted him, and all Men must come to him by Repentance; but the more the Sins, the more the Sinners want him: So *Matth.* x. 28. *Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul.* It is impossible *not* to fear such as can kill the Body; but we must not fear the one in Comparison with the other, who can make us miserable for ever. So *Luke* xii. 29. *Seek ye not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink;* which is impossible to be understood positively, by at least three Quarters of the World, who must neither eat nor drink at all, unless they seek it, and seek it in earnest too, with Toil and great Pains: But the Meaning is, they must not seek the Things of this Life with more Anxiety than they are worth, but rather seek the Kingdom of God. So 2 *Cor.* xii. 14. St. Paul says, *The Children ought not to lay up for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children;* which must not be understood generally, and without Reserve: For in many Cases Children are unquestionably obliged to lay up for the Parents; where they are quite disabled by Age, or Feebleness, or other Cause, from taking care of themselves. The Meaning is, it is more usual and more natural for Parents to provide for Children, than the contrary; and not at all to forbid it, where it is necessary, decent, or convenient. So *Prov.* xx. 13. and xxiii. 4. *Love not Sleep; Labour not to be rich; i. e. do nothing of that kind excessively; do all Things moderately: Shew your self a diligent and careful Man; but be not a Slave to Ease and Idleness,*  
nor



nor yet to Labour and extream Pains for the perishing Goods of this World. And so, *lastly*, 1 *John* ii. 15. *Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World.* This is a very absolute Injunction in Words, but altogether impossible to be practised in the literal and first Sense of them; for Men cannot help loving themselves, and several other Things that are in the World: But the Meaning is, that Men must not love any Thing in this World comparatively with God; *i. e.* so as not to part with it, if he commands us; so as not to prefer our Obedience, and the Duty we owe to him, before all other worldly Things besides, though never so useful and advantageous, never so delightful to us. So that from all these Passages, which I have taken occasion to explain, and from many others I omit, it appears, that though a Prohibition or Command may be expressed in general, and very positive Terms, yet it is not always so to be understood, without Exception and Reserve: There is a Sense of Reason and Equity to be inquired after, which the Circumstances of Time, and Place, and Person, must determine.

And if there be any one general Rule to know, when this negative Particle *not* is to be universally exclusive of all Degrees whatever, belonging to the Thing prohibited, it may perchance be this, where-ever the Things prohibited are naturally and in themselves unlawful. So *Rom.* xiii. 13. *Not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envyings.* Here the Things are in themselves unlawful and abominable, and therefore there is no Exception to be made; no Degree of them is lawful, or to be admitted; they are all, and every of them, stark naught, and therefore certainly prohibited in general, and without Reserve. But where the Matter of the Prohibition is in its own Nature innocent, and perfectly indifferent, and becomes prohibited because of some Abuse of it; there, though the Words of the Prohibition be general, yet the Thing can be no farther understood to be prohibited than it is abused, or as far as may guard it from Abuse. So though *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*, prohibited Women plaited and brodered Hair, and Gold and Pearls, and costly Array; yet are they not necessarily to be understood to prohibit them the Use and Ornament of any of those Things in general, though the Injunction be expressed in very positive Terms; because there is nothing, in their Natures, evil; but what is evil, is by Abuse, and accidentally becomes so; and because we have seen a great many Places of Scriptures expressed as generally and absolutely as these, and yet to bear Exceptions and Reserves, and a more limited Sense.

Nor, *Thirdly*, is it absolutely necessary that all these Things should absolutely be forbidden, from the Design and Purpose of these two Saints and Apostles, which seems *principally* the recommending such Things to the Women, as would make them good Wives and good Christians, *Good Works*, and such as became People professing Christianity (as we shall see in due Time) and *secondarily* such decent, grave, external Habit, as would answer and become those good Works; but such especially as would give no Scandal and Offence, nor minister Temptations to another. Now such Design is no way obstructed by a moderate and well-regulated Use of all or any of these Ornaments; and therefore there is neither Need nor Reason to conclude that all, nor any of these Particulars here mentioned, are universally absolutely forbidden to Women, either from the Nature of the Things themselves, or from the Way and Manner of Expression; or lastly, from the End proposed both by *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*: All these are secured, although the Words be taken in a laxer and more moderate Sense.

But though it may be reasonable enough to think these Words of both Apostles (which I join together, because they are so like to, and explain, one another) are not to be understood literally and strictly; yet something is undoubtedly forbidden thereby; and what that is, it may be fit to know; which was the *second Thing* I intended



intended to confider; after having shewn what should *not* be understood by these negative Instructions concerning outward Ornaments and Habits.

And, *first*, we may reasonably conclude, that St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* would be understood to forbid all such Gaiety and Costliness of Attire, as certainly minister to Pride, and foster Vanity. There is no Body doubts but every thing sinful, and tending to God's Dishonour, is here prohibited; and if either Newness, Rarity, and Costliness of Habit, occasion Pride and Vanity, it is certainly here condemned. The Truth of it is, it seems difficult to conceive what kind of Pride it is, that can be raised in Peoples Minds on these Accounts; how they can come to think more highly of themselves than others, and than they ought to do, because they have other Cloaths, and are otherwise drest than *they* are. But whatever it is, it is evident, that the Effect, and not the Cause, is here prohibited, since the Cause is every thing by which the Fancy is blown up: And it is not only Gold and Pearls, and costly Apparel, that occasion this disordered Fancy, and this foolish Vanity of Heart, but any thing that People put a Value and Esteem upon, and think it raises them above their Neighbours: For it is not the Richness of a thing that is always the Ground of its Esteem: If a thing of lesser Price be more fashionable, it is more desired, and more valued by the Wearer; and if *loose and flowing Hair* were modish, it would then occasion more Pride and Vanity, than the plaiting or the broidering it would do. This is so well known to all, that I need not insist upon it; that the things that cost most, do not please best, if they be not also fashionable; and if they do not please, and are not fashionable, they are not so apt to create that secret vain Complacency in the Mind, which arises from the Conceit, that what they wear becomes them best, and sets them in a Rank above their Neighbour. So that it is manifest this kind of Pride, whatever it is, is not grounded upon Costliness or Worth, but upon Decency and Modishness; so that People would be proud of Toys and Tinsel, Straws and Rushes, if the Court and City brought them into fashion, and would use them publicly. And since it is Pride and Haughtiness, and vain Conceits of Mind, which the Scriptures intend to forbid and check, it is manifest that Gold and Pearls, and costly Array, and plaited Hair, are not the Things particularly spoken against, any farther than they prove the Occasions of that Pride and Vanity. And since other meaner things, if fashionable and in use, occasion them as commonly and certainly as the more costly Things; and that something or other must be used and fashionable, it follows very near demonstrably, that Pride and Vanity are the Effects, and things that are prohibited; and neither Gold, nor Pearls, nor broidered Hair, nor costly Attire.

And what is said for the Matter and Substance of Attire, is also as true for the Manner or *Fashion* of it, that no one particular Mode either is, or can possibly be forbidden or prescribed, as that which necessarily and unavoidably either occasions or prevents this Pride and Vanity; because it is not this or that particular Fashion or Dress that only occasions Pride or Vanity, for another Dress does the same thing when it is become the Fashion: And it is a weak Thing to imagine, that such a Fashion is *the proudest Fashion* that ever was, for People are alike proud in *all* Fashions: And few or none were ever proud of their Attire and Dress, if at the same Time they thought it out of Fashion, or did not wear it in spite and opposition to the Fashion: And therefore it is reasonable enough to conclude, that what Pride arises on the account of Dressing, is owing chiefly to the Opinion People have, that what they wear is modish and becoming; and therefore all Fashions are very near alike hazardous, one as the other, and as apt to raise the Pride and Vanity of weak and trifling Spirits. If *Fashion*, then, be the most obvious and apparent Ground of Vanity, and the Foundation of this foolish Pride, it must certainly be reasonable, if



if not absolutely necessary, to avoid Conformity and Compliance with the Fashion. So one would think indeed at first; but when you come to consider it, it is otherwise, and would signify nothing at all; for what is absolutely necessary to *some*, upon this Account, is as necessary to all: For if *one* must not be proud and vain, neither must *another* be so; and if *one* must avoid the common and the ordinary occasion, so must another, and so must all. But now it is impossible for all to avoid the Fashion; for if all avoid it, how could any thing be the Fashion? And that which all, or most agree in, and consent to, will be necessarily the Fashion; so that all People's avoiding the Fashion, would be only setting up another Fashion, if they all agreed or fell into one and the same; or leaving every one to their own Devices and Imaginations; which would occasion as much (and it is probable a great deal more of) Pride, than their all agreeing in *one*. Upon the whole Matter, the Consent in general of most Wearers makes a Dress or Habit fashionable; and when that has once prevailed, it unavoidably becomes the Standard and Measure of Decency: And when we think a Fashion awkward or unbecoming, it is because we have not long enough been used to it, or do not find it generally approved, or because it has long been laid aside: But to think it *sinful* to follow a Fashion because new, and conform to Custom in these Cases, is, to set up our own Imaginations against the whole World's, not only of our own Time, but of all foregoing Generations, whose Modes and Garbs have all along been very different: And though some appear more antick and extravagant than others, yet that proceeds rather from a Fondness for our own Conceits and Customs, and a liking to what we have been used to, in our own Nations and Times, than from any true Grounds in Nature or in Reason. But to conclude that one Fashion is more proud and sinful than another, argues some sort of Weakness of Judgment, or Want of Consideration. Not that some sort of Fashions do not minister more to Wantonness and Immodesty than others, and take up much more time, and hinder People from doing the Good they would otherwise do (which I shall afterwards consider) but that one Fashion is prouder than another, is not at all evident, though it is commonly thought so.

It is not for *us* to appear as Advocates for any of these Matters; but when things are generally decried, without any Reason or good Foundation, even good and honest People come to be scandalized at they know not what, nor why: And Scruples are begotten in some weak Minds, which they cannot afterwards get easily rid of; and when some have mistaken themselves into a Compliance with the literal Sense of these Injunctions, they fall (as I said) into an uncharitable Censoriousness of such as are not like minded. Till therefore People can discover the Unreasonableness, or the Unlawfulness of complying with the Customs of the Times, which are not in themselves sinful, or till they can discover a better Standard of Decency than the general Consent of People, I see no reason to judge otherwise, than that the common and accustomed Garb and Attire is innocent and safe. It may, indeed, become the occasion of Peoples Pride and Vanity, but so may any thing besides; and therefore when People find themselves exalted by such Trifles, and cured by their removal, they are obliged to leave, and change them presently: For even the best Endowments both of Body and Mind, are no sufficient Plea, or reasonable Excuse, for an extraordinary Conceit of our selves, or for Contempt of others; and much less any vain and gay Attire, that is truly none of ours, but borrowed from the Earth and Sea, and Birds and Beasts, and little ugly Insects, and only serve to cover and conceal our Imperfections and Deformities.

And truly, Virtue and good Qualities must needs run very low, when People seek for Honour and Esteem from such poor Vanities as these; and *scorn*, and injure too, perhaps, their Neighbours, for the Want of them; of which, if they had



but little more, they would *envy* them ; and, if a great deal, *bate* them downright. Not that every Act of Complacence in Apparel, or every Thought that such and such a Thing becomes them better than another, and liking it, on that account, is therefore a Sin, or sinful ; but the Excess of such Complacence, and the setting a greater Esteem upon themselves, and a less on others than is due upon these simple Accounts, which elate the Hearts of foolish Creatures with idle Fancies, vain Imaginations, and Conceits of Dignity and Honour, and withdraw them from more grave and serious Objects, on which they might and should be better employed. It appears, therefore, from the whole, that the Apostles do not design to forbid to Women altogether the Use of Gold, or Pearls, or costly Attire, the broidering or the plaiting of the Hair ; neither from the Nature of the Things themselves, which are not evil, but indifferent, and either innocent or evil as they are used ; nor from the Manner of Expression, though it look like negative and universal, since a great many other Passages are full as absolute and universal, that yet must needs be taken in a restrained and equitable Sense : Nor, *lastly*, from their main Design ; which is to let the Women know, what are the truest Ornaments and Honours of their Sex, Good Qualities, and Good Works ; and that their first and principal Care should be, to secure that main Point, which will recommend them both to God and Man, and make them useful in their Generations ; that whatever Value and Esteem the idle and the inconsiderate Part of Mankind may have put upon Attire and Dress, yet that there is no true Worth in any such Appearances : That it is indeed become necessary to do as is commonly done ; but that the Commendation that arises thence, is not at all desirable, or any ways beneficial ; and that, of all Things in the World, they have the least Reason to be proud and vain on these Accounts, since even the Beauty, and the Comeliness they aim at in these Dresses, (if they should really attain it) were no such mighty Prize ; a sickly Creature of the Fancy, born and nourished unaccountably, and lost by Humour, or a thousand Accidents.

The first Thing, therefore, that is meant, is, that no one should be proud of their Apparel ; and that whoever finds herself exalted to undue and unusual Conceits of her own Worth, or inclined thereby to Scorn, and to despise another, because not clad so well or richly as herself, offends against the Apostles Rules, and is obliged to Repentance ; and to make the Experiment, whether a meaner Garb, and other Dress, will not abate her Haughtiness, and cloath her with Good-nature and Humility, and other such good Qualities and Graces, as become those who profess Godliness. What is farther understood to be prohibited the Women, in the Apostles Rules, and what moreover are the Things here recommended to them, in order to their pleasing God, and those they are obliged to please of Men, will require some other Opportunity to speak to : In the mean time, let them remember, that the Business of Apparel is not so inconsiderable, but that the Apostles both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, thought convenient to give their Advice and Rules concerning it, when they were treating of the Duty of Wives to their Husbands ; which is the Design I have now in hand, and shall prosecute in the following Discourses.

## DISCOURSE



## DISCOURSE IX.

I PETER III. VERSES 3, 4.

*Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the Hair, and of wearing of Gold, or of putting on of Apparel : But let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the Sight of God of great Price.*

HAVING shewn already, both from the Nature of the Things themselves, and from the Way and Manner of Expression, and the Design both of St. Peter here, and of St. Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 9. that Women neither were, nor well could be, absolutely forbidden the Use and Ornament of all the particular Things mentioned by them ; but that they were left indifferent to People, and to be regulated by them, as they should see convenient, both as to the Matter and Manner, to Substance and to Fashion, by Prudence and Discretion, so as never to become, by either Design or natural Necessity, the Instruments or Occasions of Sin : I had only Time (in speaking to the *second* Head ; which was to shew, what *was* to be understood by these Rules of both Apostles concerning Ornament and Habit, I had only Time) to mention one Particular ; and that was, that they were undoubtedly forbidden the being Proud and Vain, and Self-conceited, and the despising, and treating others injuriously upon the account of Cloaths, and Dress. I am now to proceed to other Particulars, which we may reasonably presume the Apostles intend to prohibit to Christian Women, and good Wives.

In the *second* Place, therefore, all such Attire as serves to *Looseness and Immodesty*, is here forbidden ; and this, not only if it be *designed* to serve such wicked Purposes, but also if it have a natural, an easy, or an usual Tendency that way. *First*, to be sure it is forbidden, if designed to such an evil Purpose ; because the Design itself is so abominable, the heating of the Fancies, and inflaming the Hearts of heedless and impetuous Youth, and kindling and exciting those impure Desires, that will at last consume both Soul and Body. To dress with this Design, is, to be sure, not only *blameable*, but *damnable*, without Repentance ; it is the *worst* they can do, and *all* they can do, for nothing is wanting, on their Side, to compleat the Sin. And as the Design's taking effect does not at all depend on them, so neither will its missing its effect excuse them, or diminish ought of either Guilt or Punishment.

But what shall be determined of them, who do not dress with this abominable Purpose, but only with Design of appearing Gracious and Lovely in the Sight of People, and to gain Affection and Good-will ? Why, the Rule in general may be this ; that the designing any thing, in Mind and Wish, is more or less innocent, according as the Thing designed is more or less innocent in it self, and would be, should it take effect ; so that if to appear Gracious and Lovely, be in it self good, or bad, or indifferent, the designing to appear so (whether it take effect or no) will be good, or bad, or indifferent, accordingly. And therefore whoever would know, how far she may innocently Dress with this Design, must ask her self what she intends, what she desires that Grace and Comeliness for, and what use she designs to make of Peoples Approbation, or their Admiration of her ; and according as that is better or worse, so will her Dressing and Adorning of her self be more or less Innocent.

Some



Some of the Ancients (*S. Cl. of Alex. l. 3. 11. Tertul. de Cult. Fem. 2. 4.*) seem to allow the Wives a greater Liberty in Dressing, than to other single People; but they say, it should be only where it is fairly probable, at least, that the Affections of the Husbands cannot otherwise be easily retained; but they do at the same Time reproach the Folly and the Lightness of those Men, who considered such Appearances more than the true and only Ornaments, the Virtues and good Qualities of Women: And they restrain the Wives appearing handsomer than ordinary to the Husbands only; which may indeed be done in the Design, but not as to the Effects which will have influence upon other People also. But though there may be something of Reason in satisfying some Desires; yet it cannot be a Rule of any great Security or Prudence; because some Husbands may be light, and wanton, and fantastical themselves, and their Fancies prove but weak and simple Guides: And though they should be permitted to take a greater Liberty with respect to their Husbands, and the pleasing them; yet because they live and converse with other People, they are prohibited (as well as other Women) such Dress, as, though they should design to hurt or please no Body at all; yet may have, in it self, a natural, easy, or an usual Tendency to Evil, and minister Temptations to another.

It is presumed that all Men act upon some Grounds, and that our Reason and other Faculties are given on purpose to direct and govern us in all our Actions, and to consider with them Causes and Effects, Actions and Events, natural and necessary, probable and accidental, such as are like to be, and such as may possibly be; and from these Abilities of considering, judging and determining, arises the Guilt and Condemnation of Precipitancy, Heedlessness, and Acting inconsiderately. And as a Man is pitied reasonably, that falls into Misfortunes which he could not possibly foresee, nor possibly prevent; but blamed and condemned, that suffers what he neither needed, nor should have done: So is a Man or Woman excused, for what Events are accidental and unusual from their Acts, but blameable and chargeable with such Events as might be reasonably expected; and were both natural and easily consequential of such their Actions, although they thought not on them, or at least designed them not. When Men take the proper, natural and ready Means to the attaining of an End, and such as could not probably miscarry, and such as they must needs have taken, had they purposely designed that End; it will be still presumed that they intended it, whether they *did* or no. And so it is in the Matter before us; although a Garb and Fashion should not be at all designed to serve to any evil and immodest Purposes; yet if it naturally did so, if it were such as easily might minister Temptations to unwary forward Hearts, to heated and depraved Imaginations, and raise unclean *Ideas* in the Minds of ill-disposed People, it were undoubtedly unlawful: Such Garb and Fashion must unquestionably be forsaken: There, neither Multitude, nor Quality, nor Custom could Excuse: There it would be, that *we must not follow a Multitude to do Evil*: There, no Examples would avail to an Excuse: There, it would be to no purpose to say, they designed no Evil, for it is not enough not to design, but they must give no manner of just Occasion of it; and though the Parties take not this Occasion as a Thing that's *offered* them on purpose, yet if it may be easily and naturally (according to the wicked Inclinations and Propensities of People) *taken* and laid hold on, it is to be presumed and looked upon as *given*. It is true indeed that he is in fault, and shall be punished, that *takes* the bad Occasion not designed to be given; but it is also true, that she is to be blamed and shall be punished, that ministered so proper and so easy a Temptation.

But if the Garb or Dress be such as cannot easily and naturally tempt, then let the Event be what it will, the Party gave it not, and so is innocent. The short of the Matter in this particular is this; to design an evil Thing is Sin, although you do



do not Effect it, because you have done all you could; and therefore, to dress with a Design of ensnaring weak and sinful Hearts, and to serve immodest Purposes, is most undoubtedly a Sin, whatever be the Effect: And to effect an evil End, *may* be a Sin, although you do not design it, because you took the proper and the usual Courses to effect it; and because the Effect depends not on Designs and Purposes, but upon natural and proper Mediums; and because you knew, or ought to know, that that was very likely to be the Effect and Consequence of that your Action.

But, after all, it is not easy to determine what kind of Garb and Dress does naturally and easily, and usually produce these bad Effects; for Modesty, and Shame it self, is, in many Cases, something relative, and depends upon Usages and Customs of Places, and the Consent of such a People: And that, which is accounted Modesty in some Countries, is lightly regarded in another; and the Opinions of the same Nation alter by Time and Circumstances, so that People may pass too hasty and unkind a Censure upon these Occasions, unless they give themselves leave to consider: And yet, for all that, the Parties most concerned are not left in such Uncertainties, but that they may, if they will set about it, guess pretty tolerably, and safely to be sure, whereabouts the Danger lies, from whence the Occasion of Temptation rises; and are, according to their Knowledge, and the best of their Guess, obliged to remove the Occasion, to stop those fatal Inlets of Temptations, whatsoever they be; or else they will most certainly offend against the Apostles Rules, which do at least forbid such Garb and Dress to Christian Women, as either naturally or designedly serve to Immodesty and Looseness in themselves, or minister Temptations to another.

*Thirdly*, All such Attire and Dress, as spends and takes up too much Time, may reasonably be presumed to be forbidden, because our Time is given to better Purposes; it is not, properly speaking, our own; but so much is to be expended on Things absolutely necessary, and so much on Things profitable and convenient for us, and none at all on Things hurtful.

The Consideration of the great Work that every one has to do, of the uncertain Continuance of the Time we have to do it in, of the Diversions and Impediments we daily meet with, from the necessary Business, the Corruptions of our Hearts, and the Temptations of this World, have wrought so powerfully and deeply on the Hearts of many People in all Ages, that they have quite abandoned all the World, sequestered themselves from all Company and Business, and given themselves entirely up to God, devoting themselves to Prayers and Praises, and Repentance. Now as many of these People are not over-hastily to be condemned, so neither are they over hastily to be imitated; for it hath pleased God to make the Duties, and the Business of Life, the Instances of our Obedience; and whilst we are discharging them, with Care and Honesty, we are truly serving God, and fulfilling his Commands. And when People fly from the Affairs of the World to Solitude and Contemplation only, they only shew that their Opinion is, that the *Theory* of Virtue is equal to the *Practice* of it, which is certainly a Mistake: And though there may be more Pleasure to one's self in Speculation, than in Action; yet certainly the Exercise of Virtues is much more beneficial to the rest of Mankind, and better answers all the Purposes of Religion, which are, to honour God, and profit one another.

The Use that I would make of this Consideration is, that the more thoughtful and considering People are, the mighty and momentous Work of their Salvation will the more be laid to Heart; and the less Time they will be sure to spend in trifling and in needless Matters: And though, it may be, all the Art and Skill of Man cannot lay down certain, general, or particular Rules, how much Time is absolutely



necessary for the discharging such a Duty, and how much may safely and innocently be bestowed upon such and such Purposes, what is sufficient for Diversion, and relaxing of the Mind, and when Leisure becomes criminal; though it be impossible to determine with Exactness in any of these Particulars for another, yet it is not so hard for any one, that is but tolerably careful, and inclinable, to do it in their own Case; and yet they should not use too great Exactness and Nicety in weighing these Matters, since there is no need, and Scruples may too easily arise, which are of great Trouble, and no Use. Let People consider that they have much to do, and that is absolutely necessary to be done; and much, that is more considerable than this they are about; and that too little Time, expended on adorning and setting out themselves, is much more tolerable and safe, than too much, and they will want no great Advice in these Cases, nor much offend by such a Negligence: They must needs determine for themselves in all these Matters; and they may do it safely on the better Side, to be sure; so that the Rule, in this Case, is both short and easy. It is unlawful certainly to bestow that Time on dressing and adorning one's self, that is due to God and Religion; that should be spent in worshipping and serving him, and that is given on purpose to us, to secure our everlasting Interest with him; or that which is owing to our Neighbours, our Relations, or our selves, in the several States of Life, and in the different Respects we have to them all. So that not only the Time that is taken from God, but from any one else we are obliged to serve and care for, is mispent, and ill bestowed on these unprofitable Exercises. And though a Woman may be constant in her Prayers, and Reading, or what other Spiritual Exercises she may be put upon; yet it is not enough, if she employ those Hours on tricking and adorning her self, that are due to the Discharge of the Office of a good Wife, or Parent, or the Mistress of a Family. For these are all of them *Duties*, and must be paid, and will not be excused, whereas the other might be better spared: It is not only an Imprudence, but a faulty Neglect in any Woman, to give that Time to Idleness and Vanity, and dressing up her self; which might, and ought to be employed, in looking after the Concerns of her Husband and Family, her Children and her Servants; which is the End and Business of her Relation, as a Wife.

*Fourthly*, We may reasonably presume, that both *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* forbid such Dress, as by its Costliness prevents and hinders People from doing that Good which they might otherwise do, by Charity, in its several Instances: Not that whatever Money is expended on Things, that are only pleasant and delightful, is ill spent, or ought to have been bestowed on Charitable Uses: For that is an Opinion that has neither Truth nor Reason in it; for many Things, that are neither absolutely necessary, nor yet so strictly convenient, but that one may well be without them, are yet exceeding lawful, and indifferent to be used, or let alone, as People see fit. Otherwise it would be unlawful to do any thing in the World almost but Alms; no one must purchase any thing, but what was absolutely necessary, because the Superfluity might be better employed: And even of things absolutely necessary, no one must take the better, when the worse will serve, because the Surplusage of Price might serve to Charitable Uses; and the Mind would be perpetually perplexed. And sometimes the innocent and lawful Pleasures of this Life, are in a Manner necessary to the sweetning of Mens Cares, to the relaxing of their Minds, and to the making Life it self go down with any tolerable Relish; but it is the Excess of any thing of this Nature that is blameable, it is the Extremity of things that is to be avoided. And in the particular Matter before us, it is that excessive Costliness of Apparel, that disables People from expending any thing on good Uses, that ought to be condemned: When the Woman carries the Fortune of a Family about her, and almost labours



labours under the Weight and Pressure of her Ornaments, and is really in some Pain her self, for the fantastick and imaginary Pleasures of thinking she is acceptable to another. This must needs be blameable, because it is choosing to do that, which is, at least, neither necessary, nor convenient, nor commanded, before that which is both excellent, and necessary, and their Duty: Such as the doing Acts of Charity, *i. e.* Acts of Kindness in their several Relations, and according to their several Qualities and Abilities; for since Charity and doing Good is the very End of God's bestowing Riches upon People, and the Pretence and Ground of their desiring them, and the best and truest Use they can possibly make of them; they must needs be self-condemned, that hinder themselves from putting Riches to this good Use, by laying them out so very extravagantly and unprofitably upon themselves; that, to please a vitiated Imagination of their own, and attract the Eyes of others, they, in some Sense, defraud so many poor and needy Creatures of the true and solid necessary Comforts of this Life; that sweep the Ground with that, whose Purchase would have clothed the Naked, fed the Hungry, satisfied the Thirsty, and comforted the Hearts of many Sick, and Prisoners.

I do not choose to urge this Matter with the many Instances and Examples of famous Saints of old, who parted with their Garments, sold their Ornaments and Jewels, to feed and cloath their Saviour, in his needy Servants; for though they are glorious Instances, burning and shining Lights; yet they are rather hung to shew where Folks *may* go, than to direct them where they *must*. Whatever any one does in this kind, is unquestionably very good, but yet not necessarily to be imitated by those that are *not*, nor those that *are* in the same Circumstances; but they may serve to shew, that, certainly, these excellent and charitable Christians would have thought it an unpardonable Fault, to have bestowed any excessively superfluous Cost upon themselves, when they thereby should be disabled from complying with so many noble and good-natured Precepts of their Lord and Saviour, in behalf of Charity.

*Lastly*, We may reasonably presume, that the Apostles intended to forbid all such Costliness of Apparel, as exceeds the Quality and Ability of the Wearer. *First*, Because this is an Offence against *Decency*, that natural and becoming Order, which both the Wisdom and the Custom of all Times and Places have agreed upon, as most convenient to discriminate and difference People one from another, and, in the matter of Quality, to prevent all Disrespect, Disorder and Confusion. And though an Offence of this kind, barely thus considered, be not a Sin, indeed, against God; yet, in wise and civilized Nations, this kind of Luxury has more or less been frequently restrained by Penal Laws; which shews not only some Inconvenience, but some kind of Deformity, and natural Indecency to belong to it. But *Secondly*, It frequently occasions Poverty to the Family, it exhausts the Gain and Labour of the Calling most unconscionably, when that, which should maintain the House, and keep the Children, and support the Trade and Credit of Men, is trifled off in Shew and gay Appearance, not only to the Shame and great Disgrace, but to the Ruin (often) of the Husbands. It breaks the Heart of Industry, to see its Fruits squandered so lavishly away, so simply, and so soon, by light and wanton Fancies: And when Men see the End of all their Toils so near, they are frequently tempted to a careless and a desperate Ill-husbandry: Besides the Necessity there is of contracting Debts, and entring into new Engagements to support the Vanity, which occasion them a thousand Mischiefs, and which are almost unavoidable, where People will go beyond their just Abilities and proper Qualities. It is impossible for any Woman to be a good Wife, without considering this; it is a wrong Course that People take, to be always thinking on their *Family*, or *Fortune*, and forget their Husbands.



Husbands Quality and Estate, by which alone they are to govern themselves in these Matters. They call their Marriage, *changing their Condition*; they should remember, among other Senses of those Words, that they change their Condition for that of their Husband, be it what it will, better or worse, and suit their Minds to *that*, and then the rest will follow as it should.

But *Thirdly*, It cannot easily be, but that the Occasion of this excessive Costliness and Gaiety must be, at the Bottom, Pride. It is very possible, and very frequent (I hope) for People to bear as good and humble Minds, under the richest and most costly Attire, as under the most coarse and mean; and it is some kind of Defence, when People go according to their State and Quality, that they are not therefore proud and haughty: But it is almost impossible, when People will exceed their Quality and Estates, to father such a Vanity on any thing but Pride; one cannot tell where to lay it else. And this should be considered by all Women as well as Wives, since others are as guilty of this Extravagance as they.

These are the Things that we may reasonably presume, the Apostles intended to forbid the Christian Women: *First*, All Pride and Vanity, Self-conceit, and Contempt or Scorn of others. *Secondly*, All such Habits and Fashions as may (whether designed or no to do it) serve to wanton and immodest Purposes, and prove Occasions of falling. *Thirdly*, All such Dressing as consumes that Time that is due to God, their Neighbours, and their selves, and hinders them from carefully and soberly discharging all the Duties that they owe, in their several Relations, to Husbands, Children and Servants. *Fourthly*, All such Costliness of Habit as disables them from doing good in their Generations, and from exercising such Acts, of Charity, as they otherwise should, and, may be, would perform, but cannot, through their lavish and extravagant Expences on themselves. And, *Lastly*, all such Costliness of Habit, as is above their Qualities, and just and reasonable Abilities; such as appears an Affectation of greater Wealth and Honour, and Superiority, than is truly due to them. These are Things that no considering Body can suspect are not forbidden; because, with retaining these, the Women can neither be good Wives, nor good Christians. And they, who keep within these Bounds, cannot reasonably fear offending either in the Matter, or the Manner of their Dress.

I have only to remark, that the Rules of this or any other Thing whatever, though never so strictly and cautiously laid down, will be subject to Misconstruction and Mistake, (and consequently the Practice to Miscarriage) without some Care and Discretion in considering and applying them: In every one of these Particulars before-mentioned, there are some Niceties and Difficulties, that if People will not consider Things and Circumstances, they will fall upon, and argue obstinately, and censure confidently and uncharitably. There are Exceptions to be made, and some Allowances in each Particular: For, *First*, that may be accounted Pride and Haughtiness, which is, it may be, unhappily the natural Air and Mien of People; and that may be truly Pride in some, that is but decently assuming in another. And, *Secondly*, some heated and corrupted Hearts may make a Dress, which is neither naturally nor designedly immodest, serve to inflame them to impure Desires, and make to themselves Temptations of every thing. And, *Thirdly*, some Dressings on Occasions, which every one cannot know or judge of, may expend more Time than others, and more than is ordinarily taken by themselves, and cause them to neglect some greater Duty for the present, which After-diligence may well repair. And, *Fourthly*, there may happen some accidental Occasions that may require more costly Habits, than is well-consistent, for the present, with doing Good to others; every thing has its Season. *Lastly*, There may be Occasions, where it may be lawful and expedient both, to exceed themselves in Habits, and forget their Qualities and Stations,



Stations, which they may afterwards as seasonably remember, and return in Sobriety and Constancy again to themselves. And therefore People are not to be over-scrupulous themselves in any of these Matters, nor hasty in their censuring another. There are too many Things to be considered, to determine quickly. One may with much more Ease acquit or condemn one's self, in all or any of these Particulars, because we know ourselves much better, and can frequently recover to our Memory the Principles we go upon, and know their Firmness, or their Failings. A little Understanding, with a great deal of Sincerity and good Intention, will be able to direct sufficiently and safely in any of these Matters.

Having therefore shewn in what Sense these Words of St. *Peter*, considered with those of St. *Paul*, are *not* to be understood: And, *Secondly*, in what they *were* most probably to be taken, I should now proceed to shew, what Ornaments the Apostles advise the Christian Women more especially to provide and look after, to recommend themselves to God, and to their Husbands. But because that Subject will take up more Time, than is now left us, to speak to it, I will, for the present, add a few farther Considerations concerning Habits, and conclude.

And, *First*, although these Rules are most especially directed, and relate to *Women*; yet are the *Men* also concerned in them, and may offend against them: The Reason of the Injunctions extends to them; and if they Transgress in any of these Particulars, no question but they are to blame; and so much more than *Women*, by how much they account themselves the more reasonable and superiour Creatures of the two. It is true, that St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* address their Instructions to the *Women*, warning them against the Weaknesses and Failings that have all along been reckoned properly their own, and more peculiar to their Sex: But it is as true, that they would have those Imperfections cured and taken away wherever they appeared; and therefore, if they mistake the *Sex*, they are yet right in their Design and Purpose, and undoubtedly forbid to *Men*, whatever is as reasonable and fit to be forbidden them, as to *Women*: And therefore Pride and Vanity, and Self-conceitedness, upon the score of Garb and Dress, all vicious and loose Designs, all intolerable Wast of Time, all extravagant Expence, and all undecent Habit, unbefitting their Condition and Estate, are as much prohibited to *Men*, as *Women*, by the Scriptures, and are truly more shameful and contemptible in them.

*Secondly*, All *other* *Women* are concerned, as well as *Wives*, in these Injunctions; all, that are capable of offending against Rules, are capable of observing them in greater or less degree, and are therefore so far concerned in them: And since the main Design of the Apostles is, to make the *Women* good *Wives* and good *Christians*, the Observance of their Rules is *sure* to make them good *Christians*, and to dispose and fit them to be good *Wives*, against they come to that Estate.

It is a great Reproach to the Wisdom, Sobriety, and Consideration of the *Men*, to see the *Women* reckon themselves so sure of gaining their Designs and Ends upon them, by the Care and little Arts they use in dressing and adorning themselves. They say, in effect, these wise and noble Creatures, that are so much our Masters by design of Nature, Custom, and God's Commands, and so superiour in Abilities of Body and Mind, are yet ensnared by little Fineries and Deceits, and caught by Baits as silly and fallacious, as the simplest Birds and Beasts, and Fishes. They say a great deal more than this, in truth and in effect, when they put on their fine Attire, with full account of their Design's succeeding; and *Men* deserve this scornful Imposition, who look no farther than Appearances, and are governed by their Fancies, not their Judgment or Understanding. These kind of Frauds do commonly come home to their Artificers, and are returned again to their Disappointment, and sometimes to their great Misery; for the People that are thus ensnared, by these poor Arts and Deceits, do oftentimes awake from their delusive Slumbers, and fall into a strange incurable Aversion to such as have so cheated them; and use



them as *Amnon* did abused *Tamar*, whose Hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the Love wherewith he loved her. The Remembrance of their Folly engages them in Cruelty and Injustice, by which they would revenge their grievous and vexatious Disappointments. This is intolerably wicked on the Men's Part; but such Mischiefs happen too often not to be observed by the Women, who might learn from hence how light and inconstant that Affection is, which is kindled and increased by little Shifts and Artifices, and how soon it is extinguished; and into how much Sorrow and Affliction it may throw them.

It is very plain, that the Qualities which should recommend People to one another, who are to live always together, should be such as will last, and continue with them; not such as please them only for a little while; but such as will bear Deliberation before, and a satisfactory Reflection afterwards. The *Fancy* is a very Weather-cock, and varies upon every Turn, and little Accident; and it is too great a Risk to run, to build the Hopes of being happy upon any thing so uncertain. The only wise way, therefore, is to make provision of such Qualifications, as when People are sober, and in their thinking and considering Moods, they shall earnestly desire and value, and know are fit and necessary for their purpose; such as will not only recommend them, at first, to Favour and Goodliking, but such as will also keep them in esteem all their Lives long: This is the likeliest way to make their Condition happy. Now these good Qualifications are not the beautifying and adorning themselves with Gold and Pearls, and plaited Hair, the dressing loosely and immodestly, the devoting a World of Time, and most of their Estate, to the setting themselves out, to all appearance, much above their Fortune and their Qualities. These Things will commend them to neither good, nor wise, or sober People; but such good Qualities and Virtues as the Scriptures describe and injoin to them, and which will recommend them to the Favour both of God and Man.

*Thirdly* and *lastly*; There is something in Habit peculiarly decent, proper and becoming to every Age, as well as Quality, which ought to be observed. The Customs of all wise and civilized Nations, in conformity to Nature and good Reason, have all along made Difference betwixt the Habits of old and young People, and set a Mark of Lightness upon such as would not seem to know when they grew old, though all the World about them knew and saw it. This Humour is not, of itself, to be charged as sinful, but wonderfully vain and weak; against the Rules of Reason, which injoin to all People, as far as can consist with their Conveniency, *whatever Things are honest, lovely, and of good report*. It argues a Mind intent, and fixed too fast upon the little inconsiderable Trifles of this World, and too little thoughtful of the great momentous Matters of the other: The older People grow, the more they see the Emptiness and Vanity of all the Things they heretofore delighted in; and they refuse them *now*, although they used them innocently *then*: Age and Experience have convinced them, that such Things are not Entertainments for considering Minds: They are glad to excuse those vain Amusements past, with the Giddiness and Thoughtlessness of Youth, the Customs of the Times, and Conversation of the Neighbourhood. But now, another Age requires another Way of Living: It is Time to look a little Forward, and think of putting off the Body itself; but before that, all the Mind's corrupt and vain Affections, all its Follies, Weaknesses and Failings, amongst which, certainly, the careful and solicitous Concern for Habit and Attire may well be reckoned: And therefore, for People, well stricken in Years, to mind these silly Matters, is to forget the Rules of Decency, and to neglect the Warning God and Nature give them: And, *lastly*, to afford some little ground to Suspicion, that they want those true and real Ornaments and Beauties, which adorn the Souls, and render most agreeable the Conversation of good Women, such as the Apostles, we shall see, describe and recommend in the following Discourse.

DISCOURSE



## DISCOURSE X.

## I PETER III. VERSE 4.

*But let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the Sight of God of great Price.*

HAVING spoken at large to the negative Advice of St. Peter and St. Paul, what sort of Ornaments they would *not* have the Women solicitous about; I am now come to their affirmative and positive Injunctions, which shew with what kind of Ornaments they are *desirous* all Christian Women should adorn themselves: *But let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the Sight of God of great Price:* In speaking to which, I will, *first*, consider the *Terms* here used, and then the *Things* intended by them.

By the *hidden Man of the Heart*, is meant, the Heart which is hidden in a Man. There is mention made in the Scriptures of *the Old Man*, and *the New*, or renewed Man, and of the *New Creature*: By which are understood *the State of Nature*, and *the State of Grace*; a State of Sin and Corruption, and a State of Regeneration, or Renovation of Life, entered upon by Baptism, and continued in, by leading a Virtuous, Godly and Religious Life, according to the Laws and Commands of Christ; so that all baptized Christians, living honestly and well, have put off *the Old Man*, and are become *New Creatures*, renewed and regenerated by the Holy Spirit: And may therefore know their Condition and its Security, although they may not understand the Meaning of the Terms, *Old and New Man*, *Regeneration* or *Renovation*. A Man is also divided into the *outward* and *inward* Man, in the Scriptures; which may also be taken sometimes for the *Old* and the *New Man*; but more generally for the *Body* and the *Mind*; for that which outwardly appears, and for that which is secret and undiscovered; for that which is open and seen, and that which is hidden; for Actions and Affections, for Practices and Principles; the first being attributed to the *Body*, the latter to the *Mind*: And therefore *the hidden Man of the Heart*, is the Heart of every one that lies hidden: And this it is the Apostles would have beautiful and adorned; they would have the *Minds* of Christian Women filled with good Principles; their Hearts should be stored with such good Qualities and Virtues, as are truly their Grace and Ornament, and cause them to appear as lovely and desirable, as all exterior Garb and Dress can make their Bodies; and this adorning is to be *in that which is not corruptible*: Gold and Pearls, and costly rich Apparel, are all of them perishable Things; Things that corrupt, consume, and wear away in Time; Things that are eaten up with Rust, and Moth, subject to Thieves, and many Accidents: The Things that serve the Body, either for Use or Ornament, are, like the Body, *corruptible and wasting*: But the Mind, immaterial and immortal, requires and looks for Ornaments suited and proper to it. Amongst which, one considerable one is a *meek and quiet*, good and gentle Temper; a lowly modest Opinion of themselves, together with a silent, quiet and contented Mind under their Condition: And because those Ornaments are most valued that are most costly;



costly; therefore, to recommend this meek and quiet Spirit the more, the Apostle adds, that *it is in the Sight of God of great Price*; *i. e.* commanded and approved, and valued highly by him. From the Terms thus explained, it appears that the Thing the Apostle would say, is this; that the readiest way for Christian Women to recommend themselves to God, and to their Husbands, is to stock themselves with Virtues and good Qualities, with inward Accomplishments, such as are lasting, and will be of greatest Use and Service both here, and hereafter: This will appear from considering the Particulars enjoined. *First*, the *hidden Man of the Heart* is to be adorned, *i. e.* the *Mind*.

The Mind, or Soul, is certainly the superiour Part, and better half of Man, as being that which is to guide and govern the other, and that which makes him a reasonable and religious Creature, the greatest Privilege and Honour he is capable of enjoying; and therefore certainly it deserves to be equally taken Care of with the Body, and to be cultivated and improved. To be solicitous for setting out *the Body* to advantage, and neglect the cultivating the Mind, is as if a Man should be at great Expence to build the Walls and Outside of his House exceeding fine and stately, and shew no manner of Contrivance in the Inside of it; regarding neither Beauty nor Convenience, nor intending any Furniture: This would be building for the Sight and Pleasure of People passing by, and wanting in the mean Time an Habitation for himself. No doubt but every one would blame such a Man for neglecting that which is most properly *the House*, and ought to be most serviceable and convenient, for the Sake of appearing well to Strangers, without any farther use. They are no wiser, nor less to be condemned, who spend their Time and Pains to appear externally fine and handsome, while the Mind within is suffered to lie wast, and wild, and unimproved. This is, indeed, to be wanting to their own Design and Aim, which is to make at least a good Shew; for the Mind is the Principle of that Life and Motion, which is to give true Grace and Ornament to all their Actions: So that however well the Body may be framed by Nature, however fine and handsome it appear; yet if the Mind be weak or silly, the first Motion shews it: they can no sooner speak or stir, but they discover their Defects: They are like fine Statues, whilst they stand motionless and silent; but when they shew they are alive, by Speech and Motion, they turn to awkward and irregular Figures, and lose their Comeliness immediately. This shews from whence the Beauty and the Grace of all exterior Gesture and Action proceeds, even from the Mind; which, being in its self accomplished inwardly, does govern and direct the outward Carriage and Behaviour of the Body, so as to make it handsome and becoming; so that, on this Account, they who desire Favour, Acceptance, and Goodwill upon the score of Beauty, and a good Appearance, would never find their Labour lost, in adorning and improving of their Minds; it will both answer *that*, and a great many better Ends. The Heart or Mind of Man is, of it self, invisible and hidden, but so is God himself, and yet acts all: There is nothing discovers it self more, or sooner, in almost every Look and Gesture; so that no Care or Pains can be too great about this first Mover, this mighty Spring, that communicates Life and Motion to all the rest.

Now the Mind (and here I speak of Men as well as Women) is to be improved by reading, thinking, and considering: People come to obtain good Qualities of the Mind, as they come by several Habits of the Body, by Use and Custom, and taking the proper Courses; so they come to Virtue and Religion, Wisdom and Discretion. They find that they are born with Powers and Faculties, different *from*, and superiour *to* those of other Creatures; they find that they can call to mind Things past, can consider Things present, and compare them one with another, and know their Difference, and can determine what to do in time to come; they can inquire into *their*



their own Original, and find their Species has not been from all Eternity, but was in time created by a Being, existing necessarily it self, and voluntarily producing all Things else : They find this powerful Being has created them with so many Wants, that they must needs depend upon him for Supply, which brings them, by Necessity, to worship him by *Prayer* ; and yet hath crowned them with so many Blessings and good Things, that natural Gratitude excites them to return him *Praise* and Thanksgiving : By which they unavoidably become Religious Creatures : They evidently see that God hath made them and designed them to be so, by giving them Abilities and Powers of worshipping and serving him by Prayer and Praise, which are denied to all the Creatures of the World but them : For, finding it exceedingly just and reasonable, that a Being so beneficent and good, as to make them what they *are*, and to give them what they *have*, and moreover so powerful as to supply them with what they ask and want ; that such a Being should be worshipped, honoured and revered ; and finding that no part of the Creation is capable, besides Mankind, of paying him this Worship and Religious Honour and Service, they cannot help concluding, that it lies on them to do it, and that it is one, and a mighty End of their Creation.

Thus, by a little easy thinking and considering, the Mind is filled with the Knowledge and Belief of God, the good and powerful Author and Creator of *it*, and all Things else ; and fully convinced of the Necessity of worshipping and serving him, and that every Man and Woman in the World is designed, by God, to be a Reasonable, and therefore a Religious Creature. This is the first Improvement of the Mind.

The next Improvement of it, is, to the Exercise of Virtue. Without Religion, People will never be Virtuous ; but when that good Foundation is once laid, the other follows easily. When we consider God in all his Excellencies and adorable Perfections, we find him *in himself* Eternal, and Almighty, and All-wise, and Pure, and Holy ; and, *with respect to Us*, and all his Creatures, Just and Righteous, Merciful and Good : And finding these to be the Perfections of the most perfect Being, we conclude, that the nearer *we* approach to these Perfections, the more perfect Creatures we our selves are, and the more loved and valued by this perfect Being. These are the two Bottoms, upon which the reasonable Desire of being Virtuous is originally founded, the Desire of being as excellent and perfect as our Nature is capable of, and our Abilities and Faculties are fitted to make us ; and the Desire of rendering our selves most acceptable to God, who is the Rewarder of such as endeavour to be like him, and to please him. Upon these accounts, we are excited to be pure and holy, chaste and clean, and to preserve our selves spotless and undefiled ; because we know this Sanctity and Innocence is greatly perfective of our Nature, keeps us in the Rank and Order God hath placed us ; whereas Pollution and Impurity degrade and sink us below our selves, and set us on the square with Beasts that have no Understanding ; and because we know this Virtue is altogether Heavenly, and of sweetest Odour before God, and will be recompensed by him, with the most pure, sincere and undisturb'd Pleasures in Heaven, the Seat of Holiness it self : Upon these accounts, we are excited to be just and righteous to one another in all our Dealings ; because we know it is so excellent and reasonable in it self, and so becoming us, and necessary for us ; that when we depart from it, we do, in a manner, disclaim all farther Conversation with Mankind, not being willing to be govern'd by that everlasting Rule of Righteousness, of doing by others, as we would think reasonable, in the like Case, to be dealt withal our selves ; but setting up our private Will and Humour in its stead, and studying our Conveniency and Pleasure only.



There is nothing more Natural, than that every one should consult his own Ease and Benefit in the first Place: But because that which belongs to every one, is really no Privilege to any one; therefore every one must depart from his natural Right in some Cases, and submit to Rules that are unexceptionable, and impartial, and favour all the World alike; amongst which, none is like that Rule of Reason and Religion above-mentioned, of dealing with others, as we would think it just we should be dealt withal our selves. There is no Body can escape seeing the Reasonableness of this Rule, and the Necessity of observing it, to the Security both of our *Being*, and of all we have; and the closer we keep to it, the better and more perfect we are in our selves, and the more useful to others; it gives us Pre-eminence and Superiority above all that neglect or overlook it: And farthermore, it gives us Favour with God; we resemble him very much, and are exceedingly approv'd of by him, in being just and righteous. He cannot indeed be otherwise, there being nothing to sway or move him from his Eternal Rectitude; but we are capable of being biaßed and corrupted by the Temptations both of Pleasure and Advantage; and that is the Foundation of our Merit (in its sober Sense), from thence arises our Ability of exercising Virtue, and the Opportunity of pleasing God, by preferring the being perfect in our Nature, as he intended us, and choosing rather to resemble him in his adorable Attribute of Just and Righteous, than to be pleased or profited, to his Dishonour, to our own Shame and Infamy, and to the Injury and Detriment of others: Upon these accounts it is, we are also excited to be compassionate and good; the shewing Pity, and the being kind to such as stand in need of our Assistance, is without doubt an Excellence, and great Perfection of our Nature. To pardon such as have offended us, and such as are not only liable to our Displeasure, but to our Punishment; to satisfy the hungry and the thirsty Souls, to cloath the Naked, visit the Sick and Prisoners, to comfort the Distressed, to shelter the Weak and Innocent from the Power of Insolent and great Men; to right the Injured and Oppressed; in a word, to do good, in any kind, by Money, Counsel, and Assistance, by Favour or Authority, does naturally give Men an uncontrouled, indisputable Power and Superiority: The Benefactor will be always uppermost, in the Praise, and Honour and Esteem of all that see and know, as well as of such as feel his Goodness: And hereto are we also mov'd, by considering, that, by doing good, and shewing Mercy, we resemble most our Heavenly Father, the Author and Giver of all good Things; and who bestows his Favours and his Blessings upon Men, with this Design, that they should also favour and do good to one another, and be themselves a Blessing to their Generation: And hath also promised, in a thousand Places, to recompence most amply such as prefer the being like to him, and doing all the good they can, to any little private Interest and Advantage of their own. There is, I think, no Question to be made, but that the Desire of being excellent and perfect, as we are capable of being, and the Desire of rendring our selves acceptable with God, and being favour'd by him here, and recompenced by him hereafter, are the Bottom and Foundation, upon which are built both the Desire and Aim of being Virtuous; which was the second Thing to which the Mind was to attend, and be improved.

The *third* Improvement is, to Wisdom and Discretion; by which I understand not only the Knowledge and Dexterity of being Religious, and exercising Virtue with Advantage; but also an Ability of behaving themselves prudently and decently, on all Occasions, towards all People. It is possible to be both Religious and Virtuous, without Discretion; but neither Virtue nor Religion are credited or promoted by such People: They are good themselves; but their Good is not at all



all edifying, but rather hurtful: The Extravagance of their Zeal, the indiscreet Management of their Devotion, the Indecency of their unusual Way and Gesture, are so far from promoting and inviting to Religion, that they rather give occasion of Pity to wise and good People, occasion of Offence and Trouble to weak and little-considering Folks, and occasion of Scorn and Mockage to light and profane one's; whereas a sober, unaffected, grave and discreet Deportment, both of Voice and Gesture in the publick Worship of God, is not only handsome and becoming in it self, but does insensibly and unaccountably provoke the Zeal of others to Imitation, and excites in them religious and devout Thoughts. And so it is with the Exercise of many Virtues, which lose much of their Power and Efficacy, for want of prudent and discreet Conduct. Thus one may lose some Part of Respect to Justice, by seeing a Criminal treated inhumanly by either Judge or Council, or else by seeing him condemned with unseasonable Sarcasm, and in a Vein of Lightness; and yet he shall deserve his Sentence, and be justly punished: But yet this Justice, thus administered, shall not have so good Effects upon the Minds of Spectators, as it would, if they discerned such Gravity, such Calmness and becoming Evenness of Temper, as would shew neither Displeasure at the Offender's Person, nor Unconcernedness at his Offence; but a due Mixture of Zeal for the Security of Laws and Government, and of Humanity and Pity for the Miserable; for that is the Work and Business of Discretion, to attain one's End, by Means not only just and righteous in themselves, but also well approved of, and best liked by others; to do what should, and must be done, but in the most becoming and most acceptable Manner.

Thus Clemency and Lenity may be so indiscreetly exercised to some Delinquents, with respect to the Manner, and so unseasonably, with respect to Time and Opportunity, that it shall rather seem a Disregard to Justice, and an Encouragement to Villany, than an Effect of Mercy and Compassion: And though Nature strongly inclines to Pity, and the Heart of Man yields easily to Acts of Mercy; yet when it is unseasonably and improperly shewn, it misses its Effects upon Men's Minds, and is neither approved nor praised.

It is so, I think, with every thing besides of Moment; where Prudence and Discretion do not sway and manage, the best of Virtues lose their Power and Efficacy: *i. e.* there is no Comparison betwixt the Good they do under a weak imprudent Management, and what they would do, if wisely and discreetly ordered: And if Discretion gives so great Advantage to Religion and Virtue, which are able of themselves to bear themselves out, it must be altogether necessary, in other Matters of less Moment, to make them pass tolerably. The Truth of it is, without Discretion, neither Man nor Woman are conversable with, nor can they do any Thing acceptably; it is that which gives Grace and Ornament to all they say and do, nor is it to be neglected in the smallest Matters.

It is hard to tell how it is to be acquired; but yet the Want of it is sensibly discerned on all Occasions, and appears in all the Follies and Absurdities that People commit. It is, as I said, a Dexterity and Ability of behaving one's self prudently and decently to all People on all Occasions; and it is so very useful and becoming every Body, that it ought to be studied much more carefully, than it usually is; since every Body is the better for it themselves, and the more serviceable to others. It may be, *Solomon* intended to describe it in Part, when he tells us, *Eccles. iii. 1.* that *there is, to every Thing a Season, and a Time to every purpose under Heaven: a Time to break down, and a Time to build up; a Time to weep, and a Time to laugh; a Time to get, and a Time to lose; a Time to keep, and a Time to cast away; a Time to keep silence, and a Time to speak:* That is, there is a Season and Time so proper and convenient for all Purposes, that they, who observe it not, will infallibly fall into  
great



great Absurdities, and commit a World of Errors and Indecencies; and they, who *do* observe these proper Times, shall shew themselves wise and considerable People, effect their Purposes much better, and live in more Esteem: *Regard to Time*, is undoubtedly a huge and necessary Part of Discretion; but to that must also be joyned a due Regard to the Age, and Place, Person, and Quality of those we have to deal withal: The more general and extensive our Consideration and Observation of these Things are, the likelier is our Conduct to be prudent and discreet, the less Offences and Absurdities we shall commit, the more becoming and more useful will our Conversation and Behaviour be. And I insist the more on this, because it is probable, that more domestick Evils and Uneasinesses, that trouble Families, arise from want of Discretion, than want of either Virtue or Religion: And therefore, when I was shewing how *the hidden Man of the Heart* was to be adorned; *i. e.* how the Mind was to be cultivated and improved; I made no doubt of adding Wisdom and Discretion to Virtue and Religion, as Things necessary. For since the Apostle's Purpose is, that Christian Women should be good Wives, as well as Virtuous and Religious, and that it is their Duty to be one as well as the other, it must needs be convenient to urge the providing such Qualities, as are necessary to the discharging that Duty, next to Virtue and Religion: And since, without a competent Share of Prudence and Discretion, it is not possible to be either good Wives, or good Mothers, or good Mistresses of Families, it is to be no little Part of their Concern to get as much of Prudence and Discretion as they can.

The next Part of the Description of this Ornament of the Mind, is, *That it is to be in that which is not corruptible*. Whatever we can possibly adorn the Body with, is corruptible, and wears away with Time; and all the Beauty, and the Comeliness it gives, is short and perishing. Sometimes it happens, that these costly Ornaments, and gay Attire are so far from adding any Grace or Beauty to the Parties, that they are rather to their Disadvantage, and expose them to Derision, and deceive none but themselves: But granting they obtain their End, and render them as lovely as they would appear, how long does such a vain Delusion last, and what is the Use of being so pleased? How many hundred Accidents, how many sore Diseases, quite destroy this Creature of the Imagination in a little Time? And if it scape these Hazards, how strangely do a few Years disguise the fairest Face, so that an absent Friend shall hardly know it when he comes again? Sure so fantastick, useles, and so perishing a Thing as this, cannot be worth the Care, and Pains, and Cost, that People are at about it; the Praise and Pleasure of it, whilst it lasts, is inconsiderable and empty; and when it is gone (as it is quickly gone) it leaves either Shame or Grief, or both, to such as have over-rated it whilst they had it, and valued themselves upon that weak Account: They are punished in some proportion to the vain Esteem they held themselves in.

But now, the *Mind*, when that is cultivated and improved, answers sufficiently for all the Care, and Time, and Pains, that are bestowed upon it; the Ornaments of *that*, are such as answer to their End; they represent it always beautiful and lovely, to all People. It does not depend upon the Humour or the Fancy, whether Religion, Virtue and Discretion, shall find Favour and Acceptance; for they will always find it, and their Force is irresistible: Whilst Men have Reason and Understanding, they cannot help approving and desiring those Accomplishments of the Soul; nay, we may trust them with their *Passions* also in this Case; for though their own Practice be against them, (guided by their inordinate Desires) yet is their secret Judgment always on the Side of Religion, Virtue, and Discretion; and they always like them in others, how much soever they neglect them in themselves: The loosest People in the World would have their Mothers and their Wives, their  
Daughters



Daughters and their Sisters, and all their Relations, religious, virtuous and discreet, rather than beautiful; those whom they love the best, they would have best provided; and therefore 'tis the settled Judgment of Mankind, that these are the best, the truest, and most lasting Ornaments of Women. 'Tis true, that when Beauty also meets, and joins with these good Qualities, they give a mutual Lustre to each other, and set each other off, to great advantage: *This* adds a Grace and Comeliness to *them*, and they *present* the greatest Beauty yet more beautiful; but *these* are Ornaments when *that* is gone, and where it never was; these are *incorruptible*, and last as long as the Mind itself, which they adorn and beautify. These are of great Use and Service; these deserve the greatest Praise and Honour, and these will stand them in stead, when all things else are gone and fail them. All Beauty, and external Ornaments are of very little Use and Service, either to such as have them, or such as only look on: Whereas Religion, Virtue, and Discretion are of general Use and Benefit; they are serviceable to every one; they do not only make those, who possess them, good; but they make them *do* good to all that are concerned, or have to deal with them. Beauty and Wit, and Birth and Quality, and fine Attire attract the Eyes and Admiration of People: But 'tis another sort of Admiration that is rais'd by Virtue and Religion; 'tis always attended with Esteem, and secret Veneration: The one is the transient Wonder of a fine Sight, something that glitters, and dazzles the Eyes, and works a little on the Fancy, and then gives way to other Novelties, that still occasion the like Wonder. The other is the standing Admiration of some great and noble Work of Nature; which, by its Beauty, and its Usefulness, begets Esteem and Liking in the Mind immediately, and which continue there, and are excited every time the Object, or Idea of it, rises or appears. There is therefore no comparison betwixt the Usefulness of Beauty, and the Body's Ornaments, and those good Qualities and Graces that are the Ornaments and Beauties of the Soul; and no comparison betwixt the Praises, Honour and Esteem, that all good, wise and sober People give and have for virtuous and religious Women, and that short Gaze and Compliment, that vain and idle Spirits pay to Beauty and fine Habits. *Favour*, saith one that knew, *is deceitful, and Beauty is vain; but a Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.* Favour and Beauty have their Praise, vain and deceitful as they are; but it is also vain, and commonly deceitful; *i. e.* bestowed with purpose of ensnaring and corrupting; but they who fear the Lord in Wisdom and Virtue, are prais'd in earnest, and honoured and esteemed with all Sincerity.

The Choice then of these different Ornaments and Beauties is not difficult; the one are useless, the other good and serviceable; the one are lov'd, and had in Veneration and Esteem by all good People; the other valued, for a time, by young and giddy Fancies.

But, *lastly*, and especially, these Ornaments and Beauties of the Mind will stand them in good stead, when every thing besides will fail them, and be gone. The Favour and Affection, which are only built upon good Features, Colour, Shape, or Dress and Ornament, must necessarily fall to the Ground, when these decay and die; and therefore this Affection depends upon Diseases, Accidents and Humour, for its Life and Being: Now this is not sufficient to secure the Peace and Happiness of married Women; for, not having it in their Power to secure themselves against Diseases, Accidents, and change of Humour, the Affection, that is to make and keep them happy, is exceeding precarious, and dependent, and uncertain: And therefore, since it is sure and certain, that they shall stand in need of such Affection and Good-will, as is to keep them easy and contented all their Lives long, and longer much than they can hold their Beauty and their Comeliness; they



are obliged in common Prudence, to secure the Affection of their Husbands, by adorning themselves with such good Qualities, as will render them for ever acceptable to wife and sober Men, even when the Ruins of their Beauty are defaced; and those are Godliness, and Virtue, and Discretion: Where these appear, there will be little want of any thing besides; or if there be, these will excuse it, or supply it: Where Men discern the Fear of God; and a good Sense of Religion prevailing in their Minds, and influencing them to the Exercise of all the Virtues that are proper to them, according to their Opportunities and Abilities; and see them manage their Affairs with Care and Wisdom, and Discretion, and discharge the Duties of every Relation, whether Mother, Wife, or Mistress of a Family, with Diligence and Prudence; they will despise the Entertainments of a light and idle Fancy, with respect to these most solid, useful, and most lasting Accomplishments of Mind: Such Qualities as these will give them Grace and Comeliness throughout, and render them most lovely in the Eyes of all that know them, and (which is infinitely more) will give them Grace and Favour in the Sight of God. And this is that which they must principally mind; for what would it avail them to be amiable to all the World, if under God's Displeasure?

The time will come, shortly perhaps to some, and not long hence to most, when they, who have mis-spent their Life in these, or other idle and unprofitable Exercises, though not directly sinful, yet have thereby neglected to improve their better Part, to dress up, and adorn their Souls, and cloath themselves with Virtues and good Works, shall see the Folly of their Choice, and find how naked and defenceless they shall stand before the Throne of God, when they must give account how they have past their Lives in this World. And they, who have been holy and religious, constant and fervent in their Prayers and Praises, frequent in reading of the Scriptures and good Books, and meditating on the Promises and Threats they find therein; and who have all along been careful to be rich in good Works, busied in the Exercise of Virtue, and constantly doing the several Duties of their Life; shall find the Advantage also of having thus improv'd their Time, their Talents and Abilities; for they shall see that this was trimming of their Lamps, and living in a Readiness and Expectation of the Bridegroom's calling them: This was *the adorning of the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which was not corruptible*; and this they shall soon find, *is in the sight of God of great price*. What is also to be understood by *the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*, here particularly named, will deserve to be consider'd by itself, in the following Discourse.

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## DISCOURSE XI.

### I PETER III. VERSE 4.

*But let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

**S**T. Peter having told the Women, in general, what kind of Ornaments would best become them, *the adorning the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible*; i. e. the improving of their Minds in Religion, Virtue and Discretion, which will recommend them to the Favour both of God, and wife and good Men, and will last when all other Ornaments corrupt and perish; he



he comes to one particular Ornament, even *that of a meek and quiet Spirit, which, he tells them, is in the Sight of God of great Price.* We have therefore, in the *First Place*, to see what is meant by a meek and quiet Spirit: And, *Secondly*, to shew, how *ornamental* and becoming it is: And, *Thirdly*, upon what account it is *in the Sight of God of great Price.* *First*, What is meant by a *meek and quiet Spirit.* By these Words we easily and naturally understand a soft and gentle Temper, a peaceful, calm, and patient Mind, opposed to Anger, Pride and Fierceness, Noisiness, Impatience, and a restless Discontent. This kind of Temper is the greatest Happiness that can befall any one: It is that which keeps them easy themselves, and makes them so to all the World about them. Most of the Troubles and Misfortunes that befall Men, are more or less uneasy and afflicting, as their Minds are more or less prepared to entertain them; so we see the same Evil, that oppresses and overwhelms one Man, makes very little Impression upon another. One Man grows loud and passionate upon the least Occasion; a Look of Slight, a doubtful or an angry Word sets him on fire immediately; whilst another bears the most apparent Insults, and heaviest Injuries, with great Evenness and Patience. One Man is calm and easy under great Losses, whilst another storms and rages under little Disappointments: So that a meek and quiet Spirit does most evidently give the Advantage to such as have it, and delivers them from many Sufferings to which the fierce and angry, hasty and impatient People are subject; and is therefore, in itself, the most desirable Temper that can be, in a Life, that is the Scene of so much certain Misery and Trouble.

But since the good Qualities we are exhorted to possess ourselves of, and the Things we are commanded to do, must needs be in our Power to get and do; and that a gentle Temper, a meek and quiet Spirit, are not Things that we can make or get of ourselves, but such as God gives us, and we bring into the World with us, how can a Man or Woman be exhorted to adorn themselves with a *meek and quiet Spirit*? It is what every one desires, and every one would have, if he could get it. In answer to this, it must be acknowledged, that the Seeds and Principles of all our Passions and Humours are born into the World with us; and that there is generally a Predominancy of some one Humour, that from our Infancy bears sway above the rest, and shews itself conspicuously, and which peculiarly marks out, and denominates a Man *so tempered*: And it is sure, this mechanical Propensity of Nature is not by any Care or Pains, by any Art or Diligence, to be extinguished quite, or altogether changed in Education: There will be evermore a Tendency and Bias to that side, as all Men feel. But it is as sure, that Care, and Pains, and Art, and Diligence, and Time, and Use, and Custom, and good Consideration will go a very great way to the changing and correcting any Temper whatsoever; and Use, we say, (with Reason enough) is a second Nature; and we see that People, by habituating themselves, do almost become any thing they will. And therefore, though People have it not in their Power to change their Tempers altogether, yet they always have it in their Power to change them as far as God requires them to do it, *i. e.* as far as he enables them by Reason, and Use, to change them, and that is, certainly, to prevent all mischievous and evil Effects that flow from them: Thus St. Peter exhorts the Women to adorn themselves with a meek and quiet Spirit; that is, not to put off their natural Temper, and put on a New one presently, but so to govern themselves, as to be meek and quiet upon all Occasions; that, by Reason, and Consideration, they restrain themselves from falling into Bitterness, Impatience, Mutiny, and Clamour.

It cannot be, but that, in the Course of their Lives, and the Management of their domestick Concerns, a great many cross perverse Accidents must happen, and they must meet with many Disappointments, many Provocations, and severe Trials; and



if they do not arm themselves against them, with a Patient and a Prudent Spirit, their Sufferings will be almost doubled on their Heads. Now they are not called upon, to be insensible and stupid under what befalls them; but so to prepare and behave themselves, that they may do nothing that misbecomes them: Herein they are to exercise their Reason and best Abilities: These are the Proofs of their Obedience, Patience, and Discretion.

It would be of use to them, to consider with themselves, that Matters are seldom mended with them by all the Noise and Contention that is raised; they are oft-times made worse, but very seldom better; neither the Folly nor Perverseness of Men are cured, nor any mischievous unlucky Accidents remedied, by Fury and Impatience: But the Things, which, of themselves, would have done but little hurt, do, by an indiscreet and hasty Management, become the occasions of great Mischiefs: Sometimes, even for a small and inconsiderable matter, they fall into such excess of Anger and Disorder, that they thereby hazard all the Peace and Quiet of their Lives, even the Affection of their Husbands, of which they ought to be most tender, knowing their Happiness must end, when that is alienated and lost from them. There are few People in the World that are upon the square, and independent one upon another, that can compare the Provocations and Occasions of their Anger and Contention, with the Events and Consequences, with any tolerable Rest and Satisfaction, they find them so unequal and unreasonable, as well as mischievous; and much less comfortably can People, so near related, reflect on their Contentions with their Partners and Superiours, to whom they owe Silence at least, and some Submission. But generally, the Event declares, that nothing could be more their Wisdom and their Interest, than a meek and quiet Spirit: It would be better much, if they would let their Reason and Consideration teach them beforehand, (as it might) what the Event will shew them afterwards, too late; for the Learning People get by such Experiences, is commonly too dearly paid for; for they only find, that they have weakly lost, what they can hardly again recover.

When St. Peter has done with his general Exhortation to the Wives, to adorn themselves with good Qualities, and in particular with a meek and quiet Spirit; he afterwards enforces his Advice, with telling them, *that after this manner, in the old Time, the Holy Women, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in Subjection to their own Husbands: Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* From whence we may reasonably conclude, that a meek and quiet Spirit will easily infer, their being in Subjection to their Husbands, the obeying them in things reasonable, and the using civil and respectful Terms to them, as *Sarah*, their great Example, used to *Abraham*. And *Sarah* indeed had occasion, upon several accounts, to exercise a great deal of Patience and Submission; she was to leave her native Country, and Relations, and follow her Husband to a strange Land: It did not appear his Interest, and, by a disputatious, and complaining Woman, might easily have been adjudged an unreasonable Humour, and unaccountable Extravagance, and not to be complied with, to leave a place where they were easy, settled, and in great Prosperity, to go they knew not whither, upon pretence of I know not what divine Appearance, Dream, or Vision; for she had only *Abraham's* Word to warrant it. When People are not disposed to such Submission, as becomes them, to the Will of their Superiours, they are full of Scruples and Objections, and making Arguments of every thing, whilst they, who understand, and are resolved to do their Duty, obey without Dispute, and comply with Calmness and great Readiness, even under Doubt, Suspicion, and Uncertainty of what will follow.

There may be many Cases, where a nice and curious Search after Causes and Reasons for such and such Proceedings, may not be half so useful, commendable  
and



and convenient, as an implicit Trust, and ready Compliance : No doubt but *Sarah* had this Confidence in *Abraham*, and therefore readily forsook her Country, and her Kindred, and her Father's House, to follow *him* into a Land God was to *shew* him. Another Instance of her mighty Patience and Submission, was the yielding up her only Son to the Disposal of his Father, who was commanded, and resolved to offer him up a Sacrifice ; not yielding him without the greatest Sorrow and Reluctance in the World, but yielding him, notwithstanding them. The Child of so many Promises on God's part, and so much Expectation and Desire on her's, and the only Child of her old Age, must needs be dear beyond Expression : And where is the Mother in the World, that would believe her Husband had received so hard and strange a Command from God, as to offer up an innocent and only Son, or that would yield it to him, were she so perswaded ? *Abraham* indeed accounted God was able to raise him up, even from the Dead ; and therefore might offer him up with more Content, and less Reluctance, because he knew that God had promised, that *in Isaac should his Seed be called* ; and therefore *Isaac* must be raised again, though from the Dead, to make the Promise good : But whether this was *Sarah's* Faith, does not appear ; her Heart, most probably, was not supported by such Hope, but left to struggle with those Difficulties, that tender Mothers only can be sensible of, on such Occasions.

The insolent Behaviour of her Maid, under the Favour of her Husband, might have afforded her another Opportunity of exercising her Patience, and shewing a meek and quiet Spirit ; but she was not quite so exemplary there, but used her cruelly and hardly, and drove her to extremity ; which was not of a Piece with that unusual Part that she had played, in offering up her Servant to her Husband's Bed. But I intend to make no other use of her Example in this Case, than to take occasion from it, to consider how a Woman is obliged to behave her self, when she is sure her Husband wanders from her Bed, (a Case that happens much too commonly) how far she is concerned to exercise a meek and quiet Spirit, on such Falseness and ill Usage. Some of the ancient Christians, and of the most considerable, were of the Opinion, that it was utterly unlawful for either a Man or Woman to cohabit with each other, notoriously false. It is indeed said, *Deut. 24. 4.* that *if a Man put away his Wife, he may not take her again, after she is defiled* : And if this Reason hold good, it will follow as well, that if she have committed Adultery, she may not be entertained ; because, in this Case, she is much more defiled, than one divorced is by a second Marriage. But in answer to this, it is to be observed, that when it pleases God to give a Reason for his Commands, the Commands can oblige no farther, than the Reason carries them, any other People, but those to whom the Commands are particularly given : This Command would have obliged the *Jews*, without the Reason annexed to it ; but this Command obliges no one else any farther than this Reason will oblige them, which is very little or nothing : It is very visible that the Reason obliges no one without the Command, and therefore only those to whom the Command is given, and therefore *Jews* alone were tied by it : But neither is it the same Case, for a Man to keep a false Adulteress, without ever parting from her, and to take her to Wife again, after she has been once divorced and married to another, from whom she is again freed, either by Death, or by Divorce. Neither is that Inference good, that a Man must not live and cohabit with an Adulteress Wife, because she was adjudged by the Law to be stoned to Death. For tho', if she were legally convicted of Adultery, she was to die ; yet the Husband was not at all obliged to prosecute her, or to accuse her : He was at liberty to conceal her Shame, and to forgive her Trespas, if he pleased ; or he might put her away privately, as *Joseph* intended to do with the most pure and spotless Virgin Mother. As for the Folly,



Scandal, or Indecency of so cohabiting together, they are Considerations that may make it accidentally, and sometimes unlawful so to live together: But there is no divine Command, nor any natural Turpitude or Uncleaness in it, that may shew it unlawful for the faithful and innocent Party still to continue with the false and guilty one. It must needs be lawful for the innocent and injured, to be patient and forgive, to love and live with, if they can or will, those that have wronged them. And if this be true of Men, with respect to faithless Women, it is certainly true of Women, with respect to false adulterous Husbands; they are undoubtedly at Liberty, by the Laws of God, to live and cohabit with them: But as they are at Liberty to do this if they will, so are they at Liberty, by the Reason of God's Law, to forbear all Commerce with them; the Band that tied them is dissolved and broken; and the Husband, without her Consent, has in that kind no farther right to her. The innocent Wife is neither bound to forsake her adulterous Husband, nor bound so to continue with him; he hath set her free, and she is at her Liberty to do as she will. But yet this Liberty is neither to be humourfome nor lasting; if she again cohabit with her Husband, and live with him as she was wont, she is presumed to have forgiven his Sin, and to have agreed with him; his former Trespas will not be a just Occasion for her leaving him, when she thinks fit; but new Transgressions, give her new Liberty: She may endure his Falshood as long as she pleases, but she is not obliged to endure it for ever. Here therefore is room for her Religion and Discretion to shew themselves: She is undoubtedly obliged to procure the Conversion of her Husband from his evil Ways, by all the Methods she can take, likely and apt to compass it; but she is not obliged *to hurt herself*, for his sake. If, by her soft and gentle Admonitions, or if by sharp and quick Reproaches, she can bring him to a Sense of his ungrateful and injurious Usage, and occasion his Repentance and Amendment, they will be either of them well bestowed; and she will be obliged to try them. If it be probable, that the Reproofs of wise and sober People, either spiritual Guides or grave Relations, will prevail to his Conversion, she must endeavour it, with all the Secrecy and Tenderneſs imaginable; she must not suffer Sin, when she can easily remove it; and Love and true Concern will make her very diligent, and very willing to effect so good a Work. But if she be as probably assured that the Man is of churlish *Nabal's* Humour (as too many Husbands are) such a Son of *Belial*, that he cannot be spoken to; but the very Discovery of his wicked Folly will make him impudent and shameless, and harden him in his Sin; or if it will, in likelihood, provoke him to use her cruelly, as some of brutal Tempers are inclined to do, and cause her to live unhappily the rest of her Time with him, she is not, in that Case, obliged to endeavour to reclaim him; for no Man is presumed so ignorant of his Duty, as not to know he must not violate the Marriage Bed, and therefore there's no need of her teaching him that: And since it is the Hope alone of reclaiming a wandring Husband, that can make such an Attempt reasonable and convenient, and that such Hope is vain in the before-supposed Cases, there lies no Obligation on the Woman to attempt it: She is then at Liberty to consult her Peace and Quiet, her Ease and Happiness in the best manner she can think on. If she take care that her Connivance, or dissembled Ignorance, her Compliance and Cohabitation, her Silence, or her Patience and Submission; if she take care that none of these give any Countenance or Encouragement to her unkind and wicked Partner, to continue on and prosecute his unlawful Love, she is without Blame; she is not obliged to make herself miserable by any Act of her own, but to live as easily as she can in that Condition.

The Connivance of a Wife at the stolen Pleasures of her Husband, will hardly be looked upon as countenancing Sin, or any other than an Act of strong Necessity, and



and to avoid some greater Evil: The Presumption will be always on their Side, that that they will never easily endure a Rival in the Affection of their Husbands, if they could remove her. *Sarah* indeed, before the Birth of *Isaac*, out of a strong Desire of seeing the Child born, that was promised to *Abraham* with so great Prospect of Felicity and Blessing, gave him her Handmaid *Hagar*; but in this she has been almost singular; and of this, it seems, she soon herself repented, and returned to the true Wife again. In a Word, a Wife may very innocently permit what she cannot prevent or hinder; and, by such Permission, keep Possession of her Rights, and defend herself from Wrongs: She may endure her Husband's open Falshood and Adultery, without any Sin or Blame on her Part, if she cannot hinder him; and, by this Sufferance and Compliance, (not consenting or agreeing to his Sin) may lawfully enjoy all the Ease and Advantage such Cohabitation can afford her, and avoid all the Mischiefs and Afflictions that would attend and follow a Separation: Neither Religion nor Discretion prohibit an innocent and virtuous Woman, the living with a false and wicked Husband.

And when the Women find themselves in such Condition, that Separation would undo them quite, or make them at least extremely miserable (which is the Case of most) as they have truly all the need imaginable of a meek and quiet Spirit, so nothing in the World can stand them in better stead. When Injuries so quick as this, and Provocations of this Nature fall upon a violent and hasty Disposition; they generally make an everlasting Breach, cut off all hope of Reconcilement, and stop the Way, sometimes, to true Repentance, which mild and prudent Management might have effected. Nothing so wins upon the obstinate, and melts the firmest, most obdurate Minds, like soft and gentle Usage; even Silence, when it shews Submission, and not Sullenness, is apter to persuade, than angry Arguments produced in Opposition. All Men love Power and Superiority, and a meek and quiet Spirit seems to yield it to them, even when it takes it from them, and disarms them: Dispute begets Dispute, and Opposition Opposition; but Silence and Submission vanquish without Fighting or Resistance. There is an unaccountable Force in Meekness, Patience, and Forbearance; they cut off all Reply, remove all Matter of Contention, and leave Men to consider with themselves the Injuries they have done: They excite in Men a Sense of Shame, and Gratitude, and Honour, and furnish them with all the Arguments that can be thought upon, and urge them in the Favour of the Innocent. There is nothing, in a Word, so likely to prevail upon a false Husband, as a meek and quiet Spirit, a patient and discreet Submission under those heavy Injuries. And if it is so likely to succeed in this great Matter, it will certainly be of huge Use in all the less Concerns of Life: There is, indeed, no living for a Wife, without a tolerable Portion of this meek and quiet Spirit. The Folly, and the Wickedness of Men, and the perverse unlucky Accidents, that are so frequent in the Course of Affairs, do furnish so many Occasions for the Exercise of Patience and Submission, that she can never think to live with any Peace or Comfort, that will not prepare herself against them.

St. *Peter* uses, moreover, the Example of *Sarah*, in calling her Husband *Lord*, to teach the Women to profess their Subjection, and acknowledge the Superiority of their Husbands: The using civil and respectful Terms, is what becomes all People, and Wives especially; but what they are, depends upon Custom and Agreement, and of themselves they are of little Value; where Love and true Respect do not produce them, they are only decent and of good Example: And because that Anger and Impatience do usually occasion hard Terms and unbecoming Language, her giving of her Husband soft respectful Titles, may intimate her to be of a meek and quiet Spirit, which keeps People, we see, within the Bounds of Decency, and always gives good



good Words, there being hardly any surer Sign of any one's loosing their Temper, than their flying out into Passion, and giving hard Language.

These are some of the Uses that Wives may make of *Sarah's* Example: And to dispose them to the getting a meek and quiet Spirit the sooner, the Apostle says it is *an Ornament*; which is the next Thing to be considered, in a Word or two. The Use of Ornaments is to set the Wearer off to advantage, and recommend them to the Favour and Esteem of such as see them; it is something that becomes them in the Judgment of other People: And in all these Senses, a meek and quiet Spirit is a great Ornament to Wives; it sets them off to great advantage, and recommends them to the Favour and Esteem of all that know them, and converse with them, and does most sensibly engage the Affections of their Husbands; and it is that which becomes them in the Opinion of all wise and good and virtuous People; it is truly a Beauty of the Mind, and pleases all that see it.

It is often seen, that all the Things, that Wives intend for Ornaments, are ill-placed, and give them neither Grace nor Comeliness, whether they be of Gold, or Silver, or Embroideries, or other Things, never so rare or costly: Whereas this good and gentle Temper, this meek and quiet Spirit, never fails of giving Favour and Acceptance; it pleases People when they are wise and sober, grave and thoughtful, and consider best; it captivates the Judgment: Whereas the rest depend upon a light and giddy Fancy.

But, *lastly*, and to crown all, *it is in the Sight of God of great Price*. It is *Costliness*, it seems, that makes all outward Ornaments esteemed and valued; and if they are of great Price, they think them more becoming, and find themselves the more respected for them: By a Train of idle Consequences, Folks come to make these vain Conclusions; and it is better to yield them than dispute them: The Apostle seems inclined to make good Use of such a Fancy, and hopes to recommend a meek and quiet Spirit, by telling them that it is *of great Price*, highly esteemed by God: And certainly he is the wisest and fittest Judge of what is proper and becoming all his Creatures; and if his Creatures understand their Interest, they will, of all Things in the World, endeavour to recommend themselves to his Good-liking and Esteem. The Beauty and the Comeliness, that all the Cost and Ornaments in Nature can afford, are of no Value when the *Show* is over: There has been a great deal of Noise and Hurry, Trouble and great Confusion, to little purpose: The Pleasure results from the Gaze and Talk of idle, wanton People, whom they shall hardly see again: who half of them, perhaps, dislike, what the other half approve and praise; and if a Fit of Sickness comes, or a few Years steal on their Heads, then all the rest are lost. The Praise of Men, on such Accounts, is but a poor Temptation, and Reward, for such Sollicitude and Care as many of that Sex bestow on outward Ornaments. Half of it, taken in recommending themselves to God by Virtues and good Qualities, would do it most effectually, and keep them for ever in his Favour.

But upon what Account is it, that a meek and quiet Spirit should be of great Price in the Sight of God? *First*, Because it is acting according to Reason: And, *Secondly*, because it is obeying God's Commands. *First*, It is acting according to Reason: Reason is the Guide that God hath given to every Man to conduct him in his Course of Living; and when they act according to good Reason, they do as they should; they answer to the End of their Creation, and that is always pleasing to the great Creator; he sees the Work of his Hands prosper. Now to be meek and quiet under Injuries, and hard Usage, that is not otherwise to be avoided or removed, is acting with Reason; it is making the best of a bad Business, endeavouring to be easy under their sufferings; it is doing what People would wish



wish to do, even when they find they cannot: For all Afflictions (we have seen before) are more or less afflicting, as the Mind is more or less prepared to bear them; And therefore Injuries and Crosses, and hard Usage, are not so oppressive to meek and quiet Spirits, as they are to violent and furious Tempers; and therefore, it is the wisest and most reasonable Thing that Folks can do, to be as calm and gentle as they can, to break the Force of their Misfortunes by Patience and Submission. The *wild* Birds beat themselves almost to pieces, in the same Cage, where *tame* ones sit and sing; and yet the Prison is the same, one is as near to Liberty as the other. The Wives, that have the hardest Fortune, seldom mend it by Contention, Clamour and Impatience; they often lay new Miseries upon themselves by such a Management; whereas a gentle soft Forbearance gives at least no new Provocation to farther ill Usage, and bears the old with less Difficulty: It is the Wisdom of every Wife to get this meek and quiet Spirit, in order to her Ease and Happiness; and upon that account it is also commanded them by God: For God, designing nothing but the Happiness of all his Creatures, commands them every Thing that may procure it; and every thing that he commands, has certainly some Tendency that way, and would, if rightly pursued, conduce to it: This is plain of a meek and quiet Spirit. As the Affairs of this World are managed, and as Men govern themselves, there will be so many accidental and undesigned Provocations to Anger and Impatience, that People would be extremely miserable, if God did not injoin them, by all Means, to fit their Minds against them, to bear them quietly and meekly when they came: And therefore it is in Kindness to us, that he lays these Laws and Commands upon us: And because he is delighted in our Benefit, and Ease and Happiness, therefore he is delighted with our Compliance and Obedience; and therefore a meek and quiet Spirit is, in his Sight, of great Price: The happier our Obedience to him makes us, the more delighted God is with it; it is by so much the more acceptable to him.

But neither does his Goodness and Benignity end *here*; his Aim is also our eternal Good; the happier our Obedience to his Commands makes us in this World, the happier it will also make us in the World to come. The Commands that carry their Reward with them, whilst we obey them here, have also a Reward annexed by Promise to them, in the other Life: And therefore, there is still the more Encouragement to set about our Duty in these Matters. A meek and quiet Spirit does not only pay itself better than most good Qualities besides, whilst it is exercised; but since it is in the Sight of God of great Price, it will undoubtedly be amply recompenced with everlasting Peace and Rest, and Quiet in the World to come.

## DISCOURSE XII.

COLOSSIANS III. VERSE 19.

*Husbands Love your Wives, and be not Bitter against them.*

**I** Have shewed you already, in general, that all Duties and Obligations to Love and Service, of any sort, arise either from the Sense and Remembrance of Benefits and Favours past, and already received; or from the Hope and reasonable Expectation of Benefits and Favours to come, and to be received; and that this is the Foundation and Bottom of our Obligation to pray to, or to praise even



God himself; for it is for Blessings only that we praise and pray to him: So that the great Creator has no other Right or Title to the Love, or Honour, Worship, or the Service of his Creature, than what his Benefits or Favours, bestowed and promised, give him; It is for our Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life, and for the Hopes and Promises of another, that we are bound to bless and worship God. Our Duty to him is not founded on his inward Excellence, his glorious and adorable Perfections; but on his Mercy and Benignity, his Goodness and his Loving-kindness shewn on all Occasions to us, and evermore expected by us: *We love God, because he first loved us, and gave his only begotten Son for us.*

And if this be the Case of the Relation betwixt the Creator and his Creature, it is certainly more so in the Relations one Creature has to another. It is impossible for one of *them* to have any Obligation to another, either to shew Love or to do Service, but it must arise either from Gratitude and Thankfulness for something good received, or from the Hope and Prospect of something good to be received. All Duties of Mankind do therefore mutually infer one another: The Duty of a Subject to his Prince does certainly infer the Prince's Duty to his Subject, something *i. e.* he owes his Subject, call it what, or how you will: he must lay some Obligation or other on him, or he can ask no Duty from him; it is for the sake of what one gives, that the other is obliged to give. Thus I have shewn it is in the Relation of Parent and Child; there is an Obligation laid by one, as the Foundation of the other's Duty; and though these Duties are made Duties by Command of God, yet they are truly Duties in Nature and Reason, antecedently to any Laws or Commands of God: They are therefore enforced by God's Commands, because they are in themselves so reasonable and fit, and so necessarily to be observed for the good and quiet of Mankind. God has laid no Obligations on any one to love and serve another, but for the sake of something equivalent to be received at the other's Hands, all Things considered and put together. And indeed, there is no Relation commanded by God to discharge its Duty to its Correlative, but has its Correlative commanded to discharge its Duty on the other hand: Princes are as much obliged to discharge their Office to Subjects, as Subjects are to their Princes; and Parents are obliged as certainly to do their Part and Office to their Children, as Children to their Parents: The Duty of Princes and Parents is different from the Duty of Children and Subjects, no doubt; but the Duty of one is as much a Duty, as is that of the other. And since each Party is by Nature and Reason equally obliged to perform its Duty, and equally commanded by God so to do; 'tis not easy to see, how one side comes to look for and expect the Performance of Duty from the other, without discharging its own part: But yet this is the Case most commonly of that side, that accounts it self, and is with Reason enough accounted by others, the *Superiour* side. Thus Princes, Parents, Masters, and Governours remember only the Reasons, and Commands, that give them Power and Authority, and that exact Obedience, Love and Service to them; without remembering the Reason and Commands that oblige themselves to discharge their several Obligations to their Subjects, Children, and their Servants, the very Reason and Bottom of the others Duty; and oftentimes dispence with themselves against both Reason and Command, yet think it very hard and unjust, that their Correlatives should, at any time, relax of their Performance of their several Duties. And thus it is too frequently with many Husbands, who are full of Dominion, morosely Imperious, and sometimes Cruel and Tyrannical; ever remembering the Submission, Duty, Honour and Obedience, that their Wives are tied by Reason and God's Command to pay them; but seldom or never thinking of what they owe, themselves, to those their Wives, by the same Reason and God's Commands. St. Paul here makes no difference; but having said, in Verse 18. *Wives submit*



*submit yourselves to your own Husbands, as is fit in the Lord*; he adds immediately in Ver. 19. in the Words of the Text, *Husbands Love your Wives, and be not Bitter against them*. Leaving it as much a Duty on the Husbands to *Love their Wives*, as on the Wives to *submit themselves to their own Husbands*: And indeed it is so well and wisely ordered by God Almighty, that whosoever obeys his Commands, in discharging the Duty of his Relation, does thereby make the surest and the readiest Way to the receiving what is due to him from his Correlative. A good Prince is the most likely to find good and obedient Subjects; and good obedient Subjects will most likely engage a Prince to shew himself good and affectionate, and careful of his Subjects: And so the good and careful Parents and Masters are the most likely to make or find the most obedient, diligent and faithful Children and Servants: And dutiful obedient Children are the most likely to secure the Care and Affection of Parents to them; and the most diligent and honest Servants are the most likely to find their Masters kindest, and most careful of them; so that by discharging every one his Duty, the World in general would be happy, and each Particular be easy in their Station and Relation. And this is also the Bottom of that common Saying, which is also true and reasonable, that good Husbands make good Wives, and good Wives good Husbands, *i. e.* there is nothing so likely to engage one Partner to perform *his* Duty, as the others performing *his*. There is no readier way for Husbands to have good Wives, affectionate, obedient, careful and faithful, than by following the Dictates of Reason, as well as the Commands of God, *to Love them, and not be Bitter against them*. We have therefore, in the first Place, to see, what is understood by *Husbands Loving their Wives*; and, in the second, what it is, *not to be Bitter against them*.

There is a Love peculiar to every Relation, that a Man can stand in by Nature, or can contract by Choice, and it is truly distinct from every other Affection. Thus there is a Love of Honour and Esteem due to Virtue, Excellence and Perfection; and this is commonly the Love we pay to Princes, great and brave People of all sorts, and commonly our Superiours. There is also a Love of *Friendship* due to Merit and good Qualities, either real or imagined, generally paid to our Equals. There is also a Love of natural Relations, different from the rest, and which grows up with us, insensibly, from our Infancy. And the mutual Love of Marriage is distinct from all the rest; and therefore when People are called upon *to Love*, they are called upon to pay that Affection that is peculiar to the Relation they stand in to such a Party. Now the Love of Husbands to their Wives, is chiefly seen in these three Things. *First*, in being kindly affectioned to their Persons: *Secondly*, in being faithful to their Vows: And *Thirdly*, in taking Care of, and making all due Provision for them.

*First*, It is seen in being kindly affectioned to their Persons. This indeed is what is so properly called *Love*, that nothing besides is thought so; and it is so essentially necessary to the making Marriage easy and happy, that nothing else can do it: And where Men marry without liking of the Person of their Wives, if they do not intend to be miserable themselves, yet they may reasonably be presumed to intend to make their Wives so, because it is the likeliest thing in the World to make them so; and there are very few Women in the World, that would, upon such Supposal, marry; because they know, that tho' a Liking of their Person will not of itself make them happy, yet, that without it nothing else *will*. It is certain that Religion, Virtue, and Discretion, and good Qualities, and Birth, and Education, and Fortune, and Estate, are all to be considered, in their several Measures and Degrees, to make a married Life truly and lastingly happy; but yet, without a Love and Liking of the Person, there will be no such thing as true and lasting Happiness.



pinefs : All the other things will not effect this End, unless this also be added to them ; they will make Men civil, and of good Behaviour ; and consequently the Wives shall not be cruelly and brutally used ; they shall not be miserable, nor pitiable to Strangers and Standers-by ; but they shall not find themselves happy for all that. It is not Honour, and Respect, and perhaps Esteem, that will make the Wives happy ; but a Tendernefs of Affection, which they had rather have, than all things else ; and without which, the rest are vain Formality, and an insipid Courtship, a Sacrifice without a Heart, and mere Hypocrisy.

Virtue, good Qualities, and the other Considerations above-mentioned, are not only very desirable, and of great Service, in themselves ; but are also very useful, as they recommend the *Person* to Favour and Acceptance ; and if they do not that, they contribute little to making the married Life happy ; they help to make it not so miserable, as it would be without them, but of themselves they never make it happy.

I would not, by all this, be understood to recommend a Face or Shape, or Mien and Figure ; or say, that no Man ought to marry without Form or Beauty ; but understood to say, that no Man ought to marry, where something or other does not recommend the Person to his Liking and Acceptance ; because, without this Liking and Affection, he will never make his Partner happy, nor himself ; which he is certainly obliged to do, as much as in him lies. God hath not tied Men to Reason strictly in these Matters, nor to shew a sound unerring Judgment in their Choices ; these Affections are under the Dominion of the Fancy, and the Choice is innocently governed and directed by Imagination ; and whatever any Man thinks beautiful and comely, graceful and taking, is certainly so to him, whatever it is to other People. There is something most divinely wise in this Contrivance and Disposal, by which a World of Mischief and Confusion is avoided, that would undoubtedly arise on these Occasions, but for this great Variety and Strength of Fancy and Imagination, by which Men see at first, and are still held on seeing, and are pleased with Beauties, and good Qualities, that are not so well discerned by others, nor acceptable to them. Useful are all the Faculties that God hath given us ; even those that often cheat us, sometimes do us Service. Whoever therefore marries, without this fanciful Affection in some Degree and Measure, can never make his Partner happy ; because it is *that* in which she chiefly places her Happiness, and without which she does not find herself happy ; and after all that can be said, no one is, or can be happy in this World, but they who think, and find themselves to be so.

Few Women are so weak as to think they can be happy with the Affection of the Mind only ; but they all of them know, that where that is wanting, all besides is mere Shew and Appearance of Ease and Happiness : They know that Wealth and Estate gives them not quiet and contented Minds ; and they know that Religion, Virtue, and Discretion, and a World of good Qualities are lost and insignificant, where the Affection of Person does not recommend and set them off : Sometimes they are not seen at all, nor any Complacence taken in them, where the Party that exercises them is not acceptable, or finds no Favour in the other's Eyes : So that it comes to pass, that many Men are counted happy, and might indeed be so in the good Qualities, and Virtue, and Discretion of their Partners, who yet are otherwise, for want of this Affection of the Heart, through which the rest are lost, and undiscerned, and which (if there) would make them both happy : This Affection will supply many Defects, and make amends for many Failings ; this will cover many Faults, and make a World of Evils and domestick Inconveniencies lighter and easier : So that, in Kindness to himself, a Man of Wisdom and Discretion will be careful never to marry where he cannot literally comply with God's Commands to Husbands, *to Love their Wives.*

The



The Love of every other Relation may be exercised and shewn in kind and proper Effects, without this inward and sincere Affection to the Person: as that of Parents to their Children, and Children to their Parents; Brothers and Sisters to each other; Friends and Neighbours, and Acquaintance, Masters and Servants, Superiours and Inferiours; each may discharge their several Duties to each the other, in Acts of Kindness becoming, and required of their Relation; and yet, through some Misfortune and Mistake, Disgust and Provocation, may not truly love their Persons, and that, as it may happen, without Blame, and Things may still go on fairly and decently on either hand: But *this* Relation calls for Personal Love and Tenderness, and is not satisfied with all the Expressions and Effects of Love and Kindness that can be shewed, but must be secure both of the Heart and Principle, or else it languishes and dies. In a Word, it is a vain Thing for any Man to marry with Hopes of being Happy and at Ease himself, or making his Partner so, without some liking of her Person; and therefore they, who look upon this Matter as Religious, and intend to lead a virtuous and a sober Life, will never suffer any, or all the Considerations in the World, to induce them to marry, where there is any sort of Aversion, or great Indifference to a Person, or where, at least, there is not great probability of loving.

The Peace and Acquiescence of the Mind is certainly to be preferred to all other Considerations whatever, as being indeed the End of all the Labours and Pursuits of Life; every Thing we endeavour, or do, being in order (we intend and hope) to the attaining Quiet and Content. Now this a Man can hardly have, that is not easy at his own home; and that a Man can never be, that lives in constant view of an unacceptable Object, and converses with one whom he either hates, or despises. And it is a huge Mistake to think, that either Portion or Alliance, or any other such Convenience, will make Men Compensation and Amends, and give that Ease and Quiet which mutual Love and Tenderness will give. All those Conveniencies can only furnish out a better Table, more Attendance, and finer Garb: Whereas both Men and Women find they are, and can be very miserable and discontented in the midst of all such Plenty, whilst they are sure that, in the mean Time, they want that Kindness and Affection of Heart, that only makes a great Fortune easy and useful to them, and that would make a meaner Fortune relish much better.

Considering therefore, how much the Peace and Happiness of a Man's whole Life depends upon his Choice, he can neither answer it to God, nor Man, nor to himself, that marries where he does not, or cannot Love. And therefore, since a Man is commanded by God *to love his Wife*, and that he cannot love where and when he pleases, he must needs be understood to be commanded, *First*, Not to enter upon Marriage, where he does not Love: And, *Secondly*, when he is married, to continue his Love, and take all Courses that are proper to confirm and strengthen that Affection, and to avoid all manner of Occasions that may weaken and decay it in his Mind.

*First*, A Man is certainly obliged by God's Command *to love his Wife*; and because this is not to be done whenever a Man pleases, he is therefore obliged not to enter upon Marriage where he does not Love: A Man is not obliged we know, to marry, but he is obliged to love when married; and since that can hardly be, if he does not Love before, he is certainly obliged not to marry, if he cannot Love. It may not be reasonable for a Man to enter upon such or such an Office; but it is very reasonable he should *not* enter on it, with an utter Incapacity of discharging it as he ought. And therefore, the contracting of Children, young and incapable of knowing what themselves and Partners are, or shall be; and setting the Years of



Consent very forward to each Party, whatever other good Ends it may serve, or prevent Evil, yet it is certainly of evil Consequence with respect to the Peace and Happiness of the succeeding Life, if Love and mutual Liking do not follow. That Practice aims most commonly at securing an Estate and Fortune: But it were better, generally, if let alone; because the attaining of that End is not the principal and best Design of Marriage, but something in order to it: It will make those, who are already at ease, much easier; but it will not give Agreement, Union of Affection, Ease and Satisfaction of Mind, which is to be the Bottom and Foundation of Peoples Happiness: Upon this Account it is also probable, that so many People of great Degree and Rank are made miserable, and more miserable than their Inferiours, by their imprudent Choices. Respect is generally had to nothing but Birth and Quality, to Fortune and Alliance, without regard to Person, Shape and Figure, to Virtue and good Qualities, and other Endowments proper to engage and hold the Affections: And hence they become splendidly and exemplarily unhappy, as if it were the Sport of Fortune to level all Mankind; and, by some odd Disaster, or their own Folly, to reduce the greatest People to an Equality of Misery and Trouble with their Inferiours; that all the World might be alike happy, all Things considered and compared together.

There can, indeed, no good be reasonably expected, where Affection does not first engage, before Religion ties the married Pair together. A Christian, truly, cannot, with a good Conscience, nor with common Honesty and Truth, make such a solemn Promise of Affection, as the Form of Marriage calls for and requires, when he is Conscious to himself that he has nothing of it in his Heart; but finds, it may be, an Aversion and Dislike, but yet goes on for other Reasons and Considerations: He cannot answer it to God; for he is then deceiving, and, it may be, ruining one, whom at that Time he seriously professes, before God, that he will Love, and make as happy as he can. There are, in a Word, a thousand Reasons why every Man should take all heed of marrying where he finds he cannot Love; and none at all against such Caution: And therefore, some Parents would do well to consider seriously, before they press their Commands too closely on their Children, to marry where there is no likelihood of loving, or of being beloved. They have a great Authority, no doubt, in these Affairs, (as I have shewn you already, at large, in treating of the Filial and Parental Duties) but no one has Authority enough to make an innocent Party miserable; and if a Parent had, he would undoubtedly forego it. And therefore, it is not good to be over-rigorous, where it may reasonably be thought the Childrens Refusal proceeds from some unaccountable Disgust, or an incurable Aversion. The Parent may consider, that, in such a Case, the Obedience and Compliance of a Child may make her much more miserable, than Disobedience and Refusal would make her faulty; but when a Man is at his Liberty, and under no Constraint, for him to marry without Love, is inexcusable. From all which, it appears exceeding plain, that, for Husbands to comply with Gods Commands, and St. Paul's Advice, *to love their Wives*, it is absolutely necessary that they make such Choice as may engage their Affection: And that they never marry where they cannot like, for any wordly Interest whatsoever.

But to comply with this Command, it is not enough to choose at first, where Men can like: for they are also bound to continue this their Love to their Lives End; *i. e.* as long as they are Husbands; and therefore they must needs be obliged to take such Courses as are proper to confirm and strengthen their Affection, and to avoid all Manner of Occasions that may wear it out, or weaken it. Some of the ancient Christians (as we have seen) would allow the Wives to employ more Art and Cost in decking and adorning of themselves, than other single Women; because



because they judged it absolutely necessary to the Peace and Happiness of their Lives, to preserve and secure to themselves the Affections of their Husbands, and therefore indulged that to them, which they denied to others: And it is no less necessary, to the securing this their Peace and Happiness, that Men should take more care than ordinary, still to continue their Affection to them; and should not suffer Errors and Mistakes, Miscarriages and light Offences, Infirmities and heedless Indiscretions, or the like, to alienate their Hearts from them, or give them a slight and despicable Opinion of them; for that will quickly grow to Coldness and Indifference towards them, and then they are not far from personal Dislike, and an Aversion, although secret.

They who cannot bear with many Failings and Defects, and make a great many Allowances, are not well fitted for Society and Friendship, even at large, and much less for Society so constant and continued, as the married State requires: And therefore, if Men will not consider with themselves the Imperfections of human Nature; if they will not remember their own Mistakes and Miscarriages; if they will be unreasonable, and take Advantages, and make ill-natured Observations and Reflections on the Follies and Weaknesses of their Partners, and treasure them up in Memory, and reserve them to feed their ill Humour, and make them Occasions of Distaste, and Topicks of Upbraidings and unseemly Revilings; they will quickly see an end of Peace and Quietness, and find their Affection cool and languish. When once Men fall into this Perverseness, and take any Ease in entertaining such Surmises and Conceits, as will (although insensibly) beget a cheap and vile Opinion of them, they have laid the Foundation of future Discontent and Discord, and are in Readiness and Disposition for Aversion and Hate to follow; and then the greatest Care and Circumspection, the most observant and discreet Behaviour of the Women, is not able to regain their good Opinion and Esteem. When once the Heart is cold, or alienated and estranged, it is a Work of mighty Difficulty to bring it on again, and warm it into new Affection: And therefore every thing, that tends to such estranging of it, is to be carefully avoided by all that would themselves be easy, and make their Partners so also.

The Women are presumed, because it is so much their Interest, as well as Duty, to attend this Matter carefully, to preserve the Affection and Esteem of their Husbands, by all the fair and virtuous Methods they can take, but that will not suffice, unless the Men will make it easy to them by Prudence and Good-nature: *They* must be always disposed to think well of, and take in good Part, the Endeavours of the others; for it is not enough, that a Thing be well *done*, unless it be also well *taken*: Without this Consideration and Goodness of Disposition, there would be no such thing as Love and mutual Kindness: For all Creatures are Imperfect, and stand in need of Patience and Forgiveness at one another's Hands: And in a constant Conversation, and the Management of many and various Family Affairs, there will unavoidably arise many Occasions of Disagreement, and Distaste; and if, on both Sides, there be not a Readiness to make the kindest Construction of each other's Actions, to believe the best; and lay the Faults upon unlucky Accidents, and disregard a great many Inconveniencies, and pass them over patiently and gently, the conjugal Affection will be quickly lost; for it only lives by kind Forbearance, mutual Condescension, and a good Esteem of each the other.

And when a Man considers, that it is his Interest and his Ease, as well as Duty, to love his Partner, and that he ceases to be quiet and happy when he begins to dislike, or be averse to her; he will find it worth his while to take some Care and Pains to feed, and to continue his Affection: It will not be thought so indifferent a Thing to like or dislike, even with respect to *this* World, that it should be a matter of Humour,



Humour, and not Choice, to be a good Husband; for it is the wisest and most useful Thing that he can do, and that which will contribute most to his Content and Quiet; and therefore for his own sake, a tolerably prudent Man, considering he can never change it, will make the best of his Condition; which will be by making it most easy and delightful to them both; since, in all likelihood, of the many Millions of married People in the World, a very few are happy and at ease, whose Partners are not so in like measure with them.

I have dwelt thus long upon this Subject; because, though it deserve the most serious Consideration, yet it seldom has it. It would not be out of the Way, to say, that most Men in the World (at least in these Parts) are happy, or unhappy, according to the Choice they make of their Wives. So far at least is certain, that a bad Choice will trouble all the rest of their Felicities, and hinder Men from being easy with them: And therefore, since it is of so great Consequence, it wants, and ought to have a great and sober Deliberation. It is the Means and Method God hath pitched upon, to continue on the World, till he sees fit to put an End to it; and tho' he hath implanted in Men such Desires as are conducive to the End he hath designed; yet he hath given them Reason, Judgment, and Understanding to direct and guide them in their Choice, and to give the Check to their Imagination in some measure, and distinguish them from all inferior Creatures. They are not, like those Creatures, at their Liberty to wander up and down as common to the whole Species; but they must fix on one particular and proper Object, and settle there: As their first Father had but one *Eve*, so are his Children to content themselves with such like Choice, and there abide till Death shall set them at their Liberty. This is the original Appointment of Marriage, even in Paradise, when Man was high in God's Favour.

Now, because it is impossible, were there are two Persons and two Wills, but there will be Dispute in Matters of Debate and Doubt, which shall be uppermost and superiour, God hath decided it, as well by natural Indications, as by positive Commands, that Man shall reign and govern, and therefore Women are to be obedient and submissive: But in return for this Submission and Obedience, Man is to love his Wife, and to affect *her*, above all the World. This he is commanded by God to do; and because it is not in Man's power to love and like whom, and where-ever he will, he is in Reason obliged to marry no where but where he can love; he cannot otherwise comply with God's Commands: The Reasonableness and Necessity of this, I have been trying to shew from many great Inconveniencies and grievous Mischiefs, that are likely, and do usually arise from marrying otherwise, upon mere worldly Considerations. Not that many other Things, besides Affection to the Person, are not to be well considered and sought after; for they are undoubtedly, and Men without them never will nor can be happy, especially religious Education, virtuous and discreet Behaviour, and other good Qualities, as well as Birth and Fortune: But that all other Considerations are of little use to make a Marriage happy, where Affection to the Person is found wanting; all Advantages imaginable will not make a Woman easy, where the Affection of the Heart is wanting: And since the Wife is to be made as happy as she can by Marriage, a Husband cannot answer it to God, nor her, nor to himself, that marries with Aversion and Dislike.

And it is yet more reasonable, that when the Men are married, they should still continue on their Love; and, in order to that, should take all Courses to confirm and strengthen their Affection, and avoid all manner of Occasions that may weaken and decay it. Because, without this personal Love, they will be in great danger of not continuing true and faithful to their Vows; and of not making such Provision for them as is fit and reasonable, which are the other Particulars in which the Love of Husbands is required to shew itself, of which, &c.

DISCOURSE



## DISCOURSE XIII.

COLOSSIANS III. VERSE 19.

*Husbands Love your Wives, and be not Bitter against them.*

**H**A V I N G shewn you, that the Laws of God, enjoying the Performance of such and such Duties to Parties so and so related, are all in Conformity to right Reason and the Laws of Nature ; and exact and require no other Performances than what are necessary to the fair and due Discharge of all those several Duties : And that all the several Duties of Relations of all sorts (none in the World excepted, no not that between the great Creator and his Creature) do mutually infer each other, and are therefore due, and paid for the sake of each the other : And that, in the particular Case before us, God having made it first in Nature and Reason, and, afterwards, by positive Command, the Duty of *Wives* to be *submissive, subject, and obedient to their Husbands*, had also, first in Nature and Reason, and after, by express Commands, made it the Duty of *Husbands to love their Wives*. And having shewn, that the Love of Husbands to their Wives consisted in these three Particulars : *First*, In being kindly affectioned to their Persons. *Secondly*, In being faithful to them, in keeping to their Promise and Engagement. And, *Thirdly*, In taking Care of, and making all due Provision for them : I had only Time to speak to the *first* Particular, and to try to shew the absolute Necessity of the Wife's *Person* being acceptable in the Sight of her Husband, (let it be upon what Account it will) and that, without such favourable Prepossession, the Man will neither be himself easy, nor make his Partner happy as she should be. This I insisted on, for a World of Reasons and Considerations, such as all Men know and feel the Force of, whether they act against them, or comply with them : And upon this Account, that Husbands are commanded *to love their Wives*, yet have it not in their Power to love where, and whenever they please, it is but reasonable to think, they are commanded not to marry where there is any secret Dislike, and much more where there is any Aversion ; because this puts them into an utter Incapacity of ever discharging their Duty, and obeying God's Commands ; and moreover, that when they are married, they are obliged to take all reasonable and prudent Courses to settle and confirm, and continue in their Love, and carefully to avoid all manner of Occasions, that may weaken and decay it in their Minds.

To all this I have already spoken at large. I am now to go on and consider the other Particulars, in which the Love of Husbands is to be shewn towards their Wives : And the next is, the being faithful to them, the being true to their Engagements, Promises, and solemn Vows. This mutual Fidelity is so essentially necessary to Marriage, that the Breach and Violation of it, succeeding notoriously, does not only dissolve the most religious Contracts, and most solemn Promises of Marriage, and set the innocent Party at full Liberty, but it dissolves the Marriage Band it self immediately before God. It is indeed the Bottom and Foundation of all those Promises and Contracts, the very Reason on which they proceed, and the Supposition upon which all such Engagements are built, although not verbally expressed. And therefore, when this Supposition fails, when this Ground and Foundation of the Contract and Engagement is removed and overturned, the Contract is it self no longer



longer binding to the innocent and unoffending Party : They may proceed in their Engagements if they please, and choose ; but the Transgression of the other side sets them at Liberty, notwithstanding the most serious and most solemn Promises ; the Transgression (that is to say) that succeeds and follows, not that which goes before the Contract : There is no retrospect to be had, no looking back to Offences committed heretofore ; the greatest Guilt of that kind possible dissolves no following Obligation, because the Offence must have relation to the Party contracted with, who is hereby supposed to be extremely injured and abused ; and therefore Regard is only to be had to those Offences that do Violence to such Contract, which must be only such as follow after such a Contract.

And what does all this shew, but that the Nature of a Christian Marriage is such, that it does unavoidably require mutual Fidelity, and the Performance of their Promise made to forsake all other Persons, and to adhere to each the other, so long as they both shall live ? This is supposed and implied in all Contracts ; and verbally expressed, and actually engaged for in all compleated Marriages : And to this Fidelity the Men are equally obliged with the Women, how little soever they observe, or think of it. They make the same Promise ; they are tied by the same Reason, and by the like Command of God : And if there be some difference betwixt the Offence of one Party, and of the other, with respect to Reputation, and the Confusion of Families, it is not what concerns the Conscience, it falls not properly under our Consideration. It is (we have seen) the Bottom of all Contracts : *Fidelity* is what the Men engage for, on their Part, and the true Reason of the Women's engaging for the same, on theirs. And therefore in the Violation of it, there is Falshood and Injustice, they break a solemn Promise, and they do a great Injury : Let any one consider whether those be not great Matters, and not to be slightly passed over : Whether it be not what himself expects from her, and is not, for the Violation of it, ready to call for Fire from Heaven for Vengeance : But if a Man be so far gone in favour to himself, as not to think very heinously of his own Offences in this Instance, let him, to get a truer sight of the Matter, and to pass a better Judgment on it, let him remove it from himself, and consider it in the Case of his Mother or his own Daughter ; whether he would not think them injured in the highest Manner, if either of their Husbands should prove false, and wander from their Beds, in pursuit of unhallowed Pleasures : And just as he imagines *they* would take the Falshood and Injustice of their Husbands, let him imagine that his own Wife takes *his*, and bears it with the same Concern and Heaviness. It is just as reasonable and fit that his own Father, or his Son-in-Law should injure and afflict his Mother and his Daughter, as he should injure and afflict his Wife, by such his Falshood. And if the Sense of their injurious grievous Treatment move him either to Rage or Pity, it may sufficiently instruct him, what deep Wounds his own vile Perjuries are dealing daily to his Partner.

The deep Resentment of this Injury by the Wives, is therefore a farther Aggravation of its Heinousness : This Breach of Faith is not a Piece of Falshood and Injustice of little or no Moment, and which is easily passed by, and both ; but one of the sharpest Injuries that can be done, and the worst taken by those that are concerned : God has so ordered it, that, of all Wrongs, it should be the most grievous and afflicting, and felt most sensibly ; to make Men, certainly, most careful to avoid the doing it. And therefore, tho' all Falshood of this Nature be exceeding sinful, yet certainly those Husbands are yet more unpardonable, who to their Falshood, add an impudent Contempt of Decency and good Fame, and openly afflict and grieve their Partners by an abominable Commerce. This Unkindness is not necessary even to the Prosecution of their wicked Purposes, and therefore the  
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more cruel and inhuman: It is not only in Defiance to Religion and good Morals, and to the Reproach of good Laws, and the Scandal of a Kingdom, but in it self unnecessarily barbarous and provoking; it were more manly, just and honourable to be a good Hypocrite, and not to give such publick Offence and Grief, where they are bound to give all Ease and Happiness. This is a great Aggravation of Falshood, and makes it cruel, as well as impudent and injurious.

Not but that the most concealed and secret Violations of the Marriage-Faith, are also in effect unkind; and alienate insensibly, and by degrees, the Hearts and Affections of Husbands from their Wives. A great many Accidents occasion Differences and Conteſts, as well as a Diversity of Humours; and the Society is, notwithstanding them, easy enough, and to be born with tolerable Satisfaction; but that great Change and Estrangement of the Mind, that usually arises from the Husband's Falshood, and adulterous Thefts, is to the Wife remarkably conspicuous and uneasy: That Coldness and Indifference that succeeds, in spite of all their Art, and faint Endeavours to conceal it, by Civilities and formal Kindness, is easily and soon distinguished and discerned. And therefore upon this Account it was so necessary, to insist so long upon the first particular Instance, the *being kindly affectioned to the Person*; because it is the surest and most likely Way to prevent Men's falling into these adulterous and abominable Snares; and because the giving Way to these corrupt Affections, is the most sure and ready Way to dissolve and break the strongest Marriage-love that ever was: And therefore, if it be so absolutely necessary for *Husbands to love their Wives*, as God Commands, there is nothing in the World so likely to retain their Affections, as being faithful to their Vows.

When Men give Way to new Engagements, it is but reasonable to conclude, the Old ones are wearing out; they will indeed wear out, in spite of all Designs and Resolutions to the Contrary: Men are not so much Masters of themselves, as they imagine, upon such Occasions; they do not understand their Power and Strength sufficiently, when they intend to be good Husbands, and yet frequent the Company of wicked Women; the virtuous Love declines as fast, and far, as the disorderly and criminal Affection gains Ground: Those Passions seldom or never meet in one Man; a Man may think they will, but the longer he Tries, the more he will find himself deceived. He may intend and purpose, that, notwithstanding all his Follies and Transgressions, he will still retain his old Affection to his Partner; but it is not in his Power; it is lost insensibly, and by degrees, by wandring new Desires. It ends, at best, in ceremonious, formal, cold Civilities; but much more commonly in secret Hatred and Aversion, in outward Quarrel and Conteſt, churlish or brutal Usage; nay, and sometimes in very Tragical Events. The wisest Husband in the World cannot foresee the Consequences of his Falshood, nor know where it will End in this World. And therefore, if a Man be sensible and convinced, that very much of, if not all the Peace and Quiet of his Life, depends upon the Mind and Affection he bears to, and the good Opinion and Esteem he has of his Partner, he will, of all Things in the World, keep faithful to her; for so we find it is, (and wisely ordered too) that the Affection of the Wife makes not the Husband happy, unless the Husband also Love the Wife: It is the mutual Kindness of each Party that blesses the Relation; it is not the receiving Love and Favour from another, that is truly pleasing and delightful, unless our Minds are also well affectioned to them; and we find ourselves as well disposed as they, to make as kind Returns.

So Parents do not feel the Joy and Pleasure of their Relation, in receiving Love and Honour and Obedience from their Children, unless they find themselves possessed of that Affection, Tenderness and Care towards their Children, that is properly Parental; half at least is wanting, to compleat their Joy and Happiness, where  
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their own Hearts are not prepared with such Affection as is truly Parental, and peculiar to that Relation.

It must be much more so, certainly, in the Relation betwixt Wife and Husband; it will be impossible for either of them to be happy singly, either in the Affection of their Partner, or in their own; they must unite their Minds, or be uneasy: We cannot possibly be well and easy in the World, unless that other People will discharge the several Duties which they owe us; but the greatest Pleasure and Content arises from the discharging well the Duties that we owe to others; that it might always be more in our own Power to make our selves happy, than in any one's else to hinder us from being so. Let never Man or Woman think of being happy in the Affection of each the other, unless they are themselves as tenderly affectioned to the other, as the other is to them. And therefore it is a vain Mistake, for any Husband to think he shall live easily and kindly with his Partner, be her Affection never so strong and true to him, whilst he is, in his Heart, indifferent, or cold to her. And upon this Account, whoever would be truly happy (as far as Men can be in such Relation) must certainly be faithful to his Vows, and never wander.

Were not Religion any ways concerned in this Dispute, were there no Obligation on the Conscience urging this Fidelity; yet common Prudence and Experience would prescribe it, as the likeliest Method of securing that Affection of Husbands to their Wives, that is truly necessary to the Discharge of that Relation, and to the promoting and maintaining Domestick Peace and Happiness, in the Manner that is needful. I shall therefore need only to mention the Command of God, enjoying this Fidelity, which, added to the former Reasons, makes the Transgressor inexcusable. It is truly so much a Man's *Interest* to be true and faithful to his Vows and Promises, that it is enough barely to say, it is his *Duty* also. It is *one* of *ten* Commandments, which argues its Importance most convincingly. All married People are forbid Adultery; and, in order to fulfilling that Command, are bid to love each other; for they, who love each other, will be faithful to each other; and they who are not faithful to each other, will not, cannot long continue loving each other as they ought.

To all these Reasons and Commands the Men of Liberty have nothing to oppose in Earnest, but the Examples of some Men in Scripture, high in God's Favour; who yet had more Wives than one, or at least had many Concubines. But to this it may be answered, that *Example* is not the Rule of Life, but *Precept*: A great many good Men have done very ill Things; and when the Scriptures recount their evil Actions, without Blame or Censure, they do not thereby justify and approve them: If there be a Rule in Scripture censuring and forbidding such and such Actions, it is enough; those Actions are sufficiently condemned by such a general Rule, though not particularly blamed in the Recital of them. We should have known Murder and Adultery to have been great Sins in *David*, by their being expressly prohibited by God's Commands, although the Scriptures had told us an hundred Times, that he was a Man after God's own Heart, and had not mentioned God's being highly displeased at them in Particular. His being a Man after God's own Heart, would not have made us believe that Murder and Adultery were innocent and allowed in him, whilst we found them condemned by God's Word in general; but we should have concluded, that *David* was, except in these Matters, a careful Worshipper of God, and, for many good Qualities, dear to him. But however, some of these Liberties might be permitted in those Days and Places, for Reasons proper and peculiar to them, which would not be fit for other Folks, at other Times. And *lastly*, it is most reasonable to look to the first Institution of it, which was in Paradise, where *Adam* had but one *Eve*: And in the Restoration of the



the World by *Noah* and his Sons, after the Flood, where each of them had but one Wife: And yet, at these two Seasons, there was the greatest Occasion of multiplying People to inhabit the World, that ever yet has been; and whatever Permissions, or Indulgences followed afterwards, it is certain that our Saviour Christ reduced it to its first Appointment and Institution, and so the Christian World has ever since maintained it.

The other Particular, in which the Husbands are to shew they Love their Wives, is, in taking Care of, and making all due Provision for them: To maintain them as becomes their Partners, whilst they live, and to leave them wherewithal to subsist, according to their Estate and Condition, in Case they happen to survive them. They are, according to good Sense and Reason, and to the Customs of our Country, *Friends* and *Companions* to their Husbands, not *Slaves*, nor *Menial Servants*, and therefore are, in Decency, to be their Partners in their Fortunes. They will unavoidably partake of all their Troubles and Afflictions; and therefore it is but just, that they should share of their Felicities: A Husband cannot fall into Decay and Poverty, nor hardly any sort of Calamity, but he will certainly have his Wife involved therein with him; they are inseparable Companions in Misery and Misfortune: And therefore what can make amends for this, but the Certainty of partaking in all their good Fortune also? Neither is this any more, than what is expressly promised and agreed to in the Matrimonial Contract, by which it is provided, that *the Wife is endowed with all the Husband's worldly Goods*; that is, she is to have the Use of every Thing belonging to him, that is necessary, convenient, and delightful; to be as easy and as happy, as his worldly State and Condition can make her. She bargains for it upon *her* Part, and he engages for it upon *his*, and is unjust, as well as unkind, if he deny it.

Neither is this Care to end here; it is not enough to let them partake of all the Blessings of this World in common with them, whilst they live together; but it must also extend it self to the providing for them, after they themselves are dead, if they survive; and that according to what is seemly and becoming, according to the Quality and Condition they have lived in (if there be Ability) and according to the Customs of the Place. It is indecent, as well as hard, that they should fall from Plenty and Esteem, into a State of Poverty and Vileness. And therefore, the churlish and ill-tempered Men are not only to blame, who deny their Wives, whilst living with them, what is handsome and convenient for them; but even the kindest and best natured Men alive, who take no Care of their Support and Maintenance, in Case they overlive them: These are properly the *bad Husbands*, who, by their Folly and Profuseness, or by Neglect and Idleness, by Gaming, or Intemperance, or other evil Courses, leave them (as they call it) to the wide World, expose them naked, and unprovided, to Want and Misery, and great Calamities.

Men will in vain pretend to Love and Kindness, that are careless in this Particular, and make not a reasonable Provision for their Widowhood, as they are able; but rather choose to live at large, and leave them destitute and helpless; as if the Sorrows of their solitary State were not sufficient. Where neither Men's Estate, Calling, nor Industry can competently furnish them with Maintenance, it is excusable, though pitiable: But where it proceeds from Carelessness and Negligence, from Wastefulness and Ill-husbandry, or from *any* Cause and Occasion, in a Man's Power to hinder and prevent; there, the not making due Provision for their Maintenance and Ease, is both indecent, and unkind, and most exceedingly blameable. A true and virtuous Love will shew it self in outward kind Effects, as well as in the inward Movings of the Heart: And they, who are the Parties most concerned, must be able to witness their being well beloved, by such good Fruits and Consequences as



that kind Passion usually produces; one of which, is certainly a due Regard to the Relation, and Affection, the Quality and Condition of Wives, whilst they lived with them, and a proportionable Maintenance for them.

These are the three Particulars, in which the Husbands are to shew the Love which God Commands them to their Wives. They are to be kindly affectioned to their Persons; they are to be true and faithful to them, and to maintain them decently and handsomely in all Respects, whilst they live with them; and to take all due Care, according to their Condition and Ability, to leave them easy, when themselves are dead and gone. Neither is the Duty of the Relation of Husbands to be sufficiently discharged, by any one or two of these Particulars, but by all together: They are indeed so chained and knit together, that whoever, upon good Principles, observes to fulfil one, will seldom fail of discharging all: He will see the same Reason, and the same Command of God, for all, as much as one. And whosoever considers Matters seriously, and intends to shew himself a sober, virtuous, and religious Man, in this Relation of a Husband, and does not marry with a wild and sensual, heedless, inconsiderate Spirit, will certainly oblige himself to take all Care imaginable to make a wise and prudent Choice at first, such as may laudably engage his Affections, and as reasonably retain them; for when that Point is well settled, the rest will follow easily, and not without it. Affection will engage Men to Fidelity, and make them duly careful and solicitous of making fit Provision for them, both in Life and Death. And truly, without this Foundation, it will be very hard for any Husbands to comply with St. Paul's Advice, *to love their Wives*; or with the other Part of it, in the Words of the Text, *not to be bitter against them*; which are in the last Place to be considered, and that in a few Words.

The Phrase seems to be taken from the Offence and Disgust that bitter Things give when tasted, and not liked. And the Advice is, that Husbands should not, by a peevish and morose, a churlish and ill-natured Carriage, make themselves as uneasy and unagreeable to their Wives, as bitter Things are distasteful to the Palate; or, that they should not be provoked to Anger and Distaste, and hard unkind Words or Actions, by the Failings, Heedlessness, and Imperfections of their Wives; as the Palate or Stomach is provoked to disgust and loathing, by the Taste of any Thing very bitter. In short, they are not to use, neither in Word nor Deed, any Ungentleness, or Rigour towards them.

There is a Bitterness of Language that every one understands, and Words that wound to the Quick; and, as the *Psalmist* says, *are very Swords*: But that, which gives them usually their Point and Edge, is the Consideration of the Person that speaks, and the Relation he stands in to us: The Words of Strangers, weak or ignorant, though never so bad, are in a manner Idle, and affect us little: The Words of a malicious Adversary make no very deep Impression, because we commonly expect no better from him: But the hard Words of Friends and Neighbours, Acquaintance and Relations, occasion us Grief and great Concern. The ill Usage of others stirs us to Anger and Indignation, but it is against *them*; but the ill Usage we receive at the Hands of those we Love, and from whom we looked not for it, occasions Sadness and much Trouble, Pain and Uneasiness within. It is the Defeat of our Expectation and Desire that hurts us most, on these Occasions: We know we love, and we would be beloved; we try to oblige by all means, and we would be again obliged in our turn; we Favour them, and would be recommended to their Favour; and, failing of these Returns, expected and desired by us, we are the more afflicted and disconsolate. Our Concern, under any Disappointment, is still proportioned to the Hopes we had conceived of another kind of Event. It is upon this Account, that harsh and bitter Words become so grievous to near Relations,  
because



because they are so little looked for and expected; the Mind is full of other Hopes, and is surprized to find them so deceived: This, of all other Things, makes bitter Words from Husbands so afflicting to the Wives; they are in Reason and Nature to look for all Forbearance, Gentleness and Patience, for Affability and Condescension; and every Thing that can proceed from Consideration and Good-nature; and they meet with all the Contrary, Moroseness, Peevishness, Impatience, no Allowances, Clamour, Revilings, and ungenerous Upbraidings: And this, to soft and tender Dispositions, is a cruel and afflicting Usage, sits heavy on the Mind, and wounds the Heart most sensibly; makes them pass their Hours uncomfortably, and oftentimes ends their Life in Sorrow.

And upon these Accounts this Bitterness is forbidden; it is truly unmanly and unjust, and becoming neither a religious nor a reasonable Creature. We are obliged to make the Life of every one as easy and delightful as we can; and therefore are commanded to be as kind and good to all the World as possibly we can, consistently with the promoting and securing of our own Ease and Happiness, and that of those who are related to us in a nearer or remoter Degree; and therefore are most strictly tied to do nothing Cruel and Unjust to any one: And therefore, when we make those Miserable, whom God and Nature have obliged us to make Easy and Happy, altho' it be by Words only, we are highly to blame; for if a little Matter will do the same Hurt to one, which a great one will but do to another, we are as much obliged to abstain from the small, as from the great Offence: And if the Bitterness of Words be so grievous to tender and good-natured People, it is because the kindest and most gentle Language is their due; they have a Right to look for it, which should not be defeated: And whosoever shall consider to what extraordinary Difficulties and Sufferings, God, by his Order and Appointment, hath most unavoidably subjected and exposed the Women above Men, as well by their own natural Frame and Make, as by a great many sad, but usual Accidents, will see himself obliged in common Pity to deal gently with them, to help, by Patience and Forbearance, to make their Burthen lighter, and to sustain them under their Infirmities.

There is also *a being Bitter* that is carried beyond Words, and proceeds to personal Outrage, Violence, and Hurt; a thing unworthy any good and honest Man, nor justifiable, without a great Necessity, betwixt a Master and his Slave, much less to be endured from any Husband to his Partner and Companion, who is of equal Dignity. This Practice, truly villainous, was of so ill Sound and Fame, so very unbecoming the Relation, that the Civil Laws did, in some Cases, allow it a just Ground for a Divorce; and indeed, when People (at least of any Education, or Fashion) come to that pass, they seem not fit to live together: But yet when they cease to be Friends and kind Companions, they do not presently become Slaves.

I have now done with the Duty of Husbands, contained in this Command, to *love their Wives, and not be Bitter against them*: In which, there is nothing but what is very reasonable and fit to be complied withal by every good and honest Man; nothing but what will truly tend to the procuring and promoting his own Peace and Happiness, and to the Comfort of his Life. And so indeed it is, with the Discharge of every other Duty: We vainly seek for Ease and Happiness in Liberty, and Disengagement from our Duties; whereas, to sober and considering Minds, it is evident, that as this World is ordered, it is impossible to be at Ease, but by a faithful due Discharge of all the several Obligations laid upon us, by the several Relations we contract to one another. When we cease to be good Fathers and good Sons, good Subjects and good Husbands, good Masters and good Servants; how can we possibly be happy? Whom shall we love and honour, and by whom shall we be  
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loved and honoured? Whom shall we gratify and serve, by whom shall we be gratified and served? Whilst we are sociable Creatures, we must have all the social Virtues; we can *receive* no Duty whilst we *pay* none. And though, when all is done, we shall never be very happy in this World of Misery; yet we shall never be so, in any tolerable Measure and Degree, without a good Intention, and a hearty reasonable Endeavour to discharge with Faithfulness and Care the several Duties that we owe to all the World; and which is truly the End and Purpose for which we are sent into it, and continued in it; and of which we shall, one Day, give a strict Account to God, and shall receive a Reward or Punishment, according to our Diligence, or our Neglect of the Performance of those Duties.

## DISCOURSE XIV.

COLOSSIANS III. VERSES 22, 23, 24.

*Servants, obey in all Things your Masters according to the Flesh; not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in Singleness of Heart, fearing God: And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men: Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the Reward of the Inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

THESE Words do plainly contain in them, *First*, A Command to Servants to *obey their Masters according to the Flesh, in all Things*. *Secondly*, A Caution about the *Manner* of performing their Duty, and the *End* they should propose to themselves in doing it: They should not serve *with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in Singleness of Heart, fearing God; and whatever they did, they should do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men*. They should not only serve their Masters well, whilst their Hand and Eye was over them, as if the pleasing *them* were the only Thing they aimed at; but they should always be exactly Diligent and Faithful in their Service, whether their Masters were absent or present, and could discover them or no; they should *be*, indeed, at all Times, and on all Occasions, as Honest and as Careful in their Master's Business, as they would appear to others, and to *them*, whilst looking on them. They should obey *in Singleness of Heart*, serve sincerely, and without Dissimulation: *fearing God*, looking up to him, and knowing they are always in his Sight; and *whatever they do, they should do it as to the Lord*; as obeying *Him*, and desirous of making themselves acceptable to Him, as well as to Men, either their Masters or others. *Thirdly*, Here is the Reason, Ground and Foundation of the Servants paying all Obedience, and due Service to their Masters, and of their doing it *to the Lord*, or in Obedience to the Lord; *Knowing that of the Lord; ye shall receive the Reward of the Inheritance for ye serve the Lord Christ*. The Service and Obedience of Servants shall not go unrewarded in the *other* World, however it fare with them in *this*; and therefore there is no want of a sufficient Encouragement of their Faithfulness and Diligence; *they shall receive the Reward of Inheritance*; they shall be treated in Heaven as God's Children: And this Reward they shall receive *of the Lord*, and therefore there is need



need of looking up to him, and fearing him, and accounting him their Sovereign Master, *for they serve the Lord Christ*. Their earthly Masters, or Masters according to the Flesh, may overlook, neglect, or evilly intreat their utmost Labours, Care and Honesty; but Christ their heavenly Master, whose they are, and whom they serve, will not so use them; but seeing from above their faithful, diligent, and honest Labours in their Masters Service, will most unquestionably deal with them as good and honest Servants, and cause them, in due Time, *to enter into the Joy of their Lord*. So St. Paul expresses the same Thing, in *Ephes. vi. 8*. *Knowing that whatsoever good Thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free*. Of these Things in their order.

And, *First*, of the Command; *Servants, obey in all things your Masters, according to the Flesh*. To obey in all Things, is a Command of very great Extent, and repeated in the like Terms, *Titus ii. 9*. and so the Children are to obey their Parents in all Things, in *ver. 20*. of this Chapter; and the Wives are to be subject to their Husbands in every Thing, *Eph. v. 24*. And yet you may take it for a Rule, that neither Father, Husband, nor Master, nor any Superiour whatsoever, is to be obeyed in all Things: Obedience, without Restriction or Reserve, belongs to no mortal Man: And therefore, let Commands be never so express and full, never so general and extensive, there will be always room, and necessity for Limitations and Restrictions, arising from the Reason of the Command, and the Nature of the subject Matter, from the positive Command of God, and from the Laws of the Kingdom, or some other Consideration not to be omitted. And though, in speaking to the other Relations, I have considered these Exceptions; yet it will not be amiss to take Notice here also, in what Particulars neither Masters can require, nor Servants owe, or ought to pay Obedience.

And, *First*, the Laws of God are certainly to be preferred to all the Commands of Masters, Mistresses, and all Superiours: If God Command one Thing to be done, and prohibit the doing another, no Master can dispense with his Servant's neglecting the Command, or venturing on the Prohibition: The Servant is there to obey God rather than his Master.

And so it is, *Secondly*, with the Laws of the Land; they also are to be preferred to all the Commands of Masters and Superiours, because they are above them, and were before them. Even in things not naturally dishonest and immoral, but such as it would be innocent and lawful to do, if they were not actually forbidden by Law; even in such Things as these, a Servant is not to obey his Master, because he has not Power to do those Things himself, nor Power to bid another do them. The Laws of the Land are superiour to all Masters, and are always presumed to enact upon Reason and good Grounds; and therefore, though Servants are to obey in all Things, yet it is only in all Things where they are at Liberty to obey, by either the Laws of God, or by the Laws of the Land: For the Good of the Community, (which is presumed to be considered and consulted in all Laws, whether it be, or no) being greater and superiour to the Good of Servants obeying their Masters, it is but reasonable the Laws should be considered and obeyed, rather than any private Orders of a Master, though what is ordered to be done, were otherwise innocent and lawful to be done, if it had not been prohibited. This puts it past all doubt, that a Servant never must obey his Master commanding him any Thing immoral, or against any positive Law of God. Thus if a Master take his Servant out with him, and order him to set upon another, and take away either his Money or his Life, his Command is to go for nothing; he has no Authority to lay such a Command upon his Servant, nor must any Servant pay Obedience to such Orders or Commands. The Obligations that all People, Servants as well as Masters, lie under



to be just and honest, and do no Hurt or Violence, or lesser Injury to any one, are antecedent to, and greater than any Obligations that a Master can lay upon his Servant; and therefore, till a Master can set his Servant at Liberty from the Obedience he owes to God's Laws, positive or moral, and free him from the Penalties of Disobedience, he can lay no Orders of his own upon the Servant contradictory to God's. The Servant must say with himself, what virtuous *Joseph* said under a great Temptation, *How can I do this Thing, and Sin against God?* How can I possibly comply with such a Command of my Master's to be unjust or wicked, and know at the same Time I am forbidden by God the doing it? God is the Master of us all, and with him there is no respect of Persons; bond or free are alike obliged to obey his Laws, and no Power less than his own can dispense with any one neglecting or despising them; and much less will the Command of a Superiour here on Earth excuse a Servant, or Inferiour, offending against God in pure Obedience to his Master.

The Authority of Masters over Servants is very useful to the Good and Order of Mankind, and to the Welfare of the World; and accounted so reasonable, that a great many small Offences are excused in Servants, under Authority, and acting by Command, because they are under some Constraint and Awe, and because a great many Inconveniencies would follow upon the scrupulous Dispute of Servants, weighing and examining the Orders and Injunctions of their Masters. But this can only be understood in Things indifferent, or in Matters wholly above the Capacity of Servants: In all such Cases, Submission and Obedience best becomes them; but where the Case is plain and evident, and the Execution of the Command must certainly be hurtful to them, as opposing some Command of God, there they must needs dispute and disobey: There no Body excuses them for acting by Authority, for no one has Authority against Justice, Honesty or Truth; and there is no Capacity too mean to understand their moral Duties, that is sufficient to deliberate, and to execute Designs that overthrow them.

But neither are all Servants alike obliged to obey their Masters *in all Things*, though innocent and lawful, or indifferent; because that all are not alike Servants. The State of Servitude is very different in one Country, from what it is in another; and in the same Country it is differenced by the Variety of Contracts and Agreements: And the Duty and Obedience of Servants is to be measured by those Contracts, and those different Customs. And therefore, when *St. Paul* exhorts the *Colossian* and *Ephefian* Servants *to obey their Masters in all Things*; if some of them were Captives and downright Slaves, and others only Servants by Agreement, and hired out themselves to labour in their Calling for such and such Advantages of Wages and Protection, and upon certain Terms; though both these sorts of People might be properly called *Servants* by *St. Paul*, and both exhorted to perform the Duty of Servants to Masters; yet were it evident, that *St. Paul* did not hereby make the State of their Servitude alike, but said the same Words to them, in different Senses, according to the different Condition of their Servitude. To the Slaves and Captives he would say, *Obey your Masters in all Things, as becomes your sad Condition, and make your Chains as easy as you can, by your Compliance and Submission*: But to the hired Servants he would be understood to say, *Obey your Masters in all Things, according to your Contract and Agreement; behave your selves as diligently and faithfully, as you have promised them to do, or by the Custom of the Place are presumed to have promised them*: He might exhort the Slaves to obey their Masters even at the Oar, and in the Mines; but it were not reasonable to think he should thereby exhort the hired Servants to submit to be sent under-ground, or to the Labour of the Gallies, if their Masters should command them thither. Neither the Customs  
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of the Country, nor the Contract gave the Masters any such Authority over the hired Servants; and therefore they owe no such Submission or Obedience. And St. Paul does not bring them into any new Bondage; but exhorts and commands them to discharge the Duty that they owe, by Vertue of their Choice and Undertaking, to serve their Masters in such a Capacity, on such Condition.

It is therefore evident, that Respect must needs be had to the different State of Servitude of different People, to know in what Particulars a Servant is at Liberty from complying with some Commands of Masters, that yet are Innocent and Lawful enough in themselves. Now, if upon supposal of these sort of Servants, either at *Ephesus*, or at *Coloss*, the Exhortation must be differently understood, with respect to each of them; it is plain it must be also understood according to the Usages and Contracts of all the different Countries of the World: For here is no new Servitude induced, nor old one abrogated, but Servants are left by Christianity just in the State it found them; their Condition is not at all altered; but not for the Worse to be sure. And if this were well considered in the higher Instances of Princes and Subjects, as well as in those of Masters and Servants, a great many weak and undue Inferences and Arguments from the State of *Jewish* or *Roman* Government and Subjection, to that of other free and brave Nations, had been avoided, which only serve to perplex well-meaning People. But that which I would chiefly show hereby, is this, that all Servants, not being alike Servants, but of different Sorts and Degrees, are not alike obliged to obey their Masters in all Things, but are at Liberty in some Particulars, according to their Contracts and Agreements; and are therefore only obliged to serve and obey their Masters in all Particulars, wherein they have engaged to pay them Service and Obedience, either expressly, or implicitly, by the Nature of their Undertaking and Employment. And that being the Case and Condition of all Christian Servants with us, is the only Case that is to be considered by us, in speaking to the Duty of Servants.

Every Servant is therefore commanded by God to discharge the Duty and Service which his Station or Agreement require of him; he must answer the End of his being Entertained, and fulfil the Conditions upon which he is admitted to Service. This is the Substance and Matter of the Command. The *Second* Thing to be considered, is the Caution adjoined about the Way and Manner of performing their Service, and the End they should propose to themselves in doing it: *They should not serve with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in Singleness of Heart, fearing God; and doing whatever they did, not as to Men, but as to God.* They must not only appear to be good and careful Servants, by being Diligent, and seeming very Just and Honest, whilst their Masters are in Sight, or when they are sure it will reach their Ears by others Information; but they must be indeed always so, both in their Absence, and when it is likely they shall never hear or know they are indeed so Diligent and Honest, but by the good Effects and Consequences: They must be so upon religious Principles, because it is their Duty, both by God's Commandment, and their own Engagement; they are tied by both to serve Diligently and Honestly, *in Singleness of Heart*, without Dissimulation and Hypocrisy: They must be, in Truth and Substance, as good Servants as they would shew and appear to be to Strangers, or their Masters, *fearing God*. They stand continually in God's Sight, although not always in their Master's Eye; and they should set his Fear before them, who sees them constantly, and knows most certainly, whether they are as Diligent and Honest in their Master's Ignorance and Absence, as when he stands by, and sees them doing Service. Whatever they do, they should endeavour to approve themselves to God, by doing it in such a Manner, that is, by being so Diligent and Honest in their Service, as that God shall certainly approve them, whether Men do or no. A Master may  
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be pleased, because he is deceived with Eye-service, and with a seeming Diligence and Honesty ; but God is not so pleased, because he is not to be so deceived : but knows the Heart, and sees the Falshood at the Bottom. And when a Servant pleases God, (as all do that are Just and Faithful, Diligent and Careful in their Business) they seldom fail of pleasing Men. They may, by some Misfortune or Mistake, or by Perverseness, fail of pleasing Men, even when they please God ; but then they have the Satisfaction of knowing they designed to please Men, and took the likeliest Course to do it. For Servants are not here forbidden Eye-service, and pleasing Men, as it imports the doing well and carefully under the Master's Eye, and whilst he is in Sight, for that is but reasonable and their Duty ; but they are forbidden the being *only* Eye-servants, and the endeavouring to please their Masters whilst they are in Sight : And are commanded to behave themselves as well, to be as diligent and just and true, at all Times, as in their Master's Presence : And if a Servant would but take that for his Rule, he would hardly ever fail of pleasing both God and his Master ; but be as Diligent and Honest at all Times, as his Master sees he is whilst he is with him, and as he would have his Master believe he always is. This would prevent all Sloth, and unreasonable Waste of Time, and all Neglect of Business, and all Deceit, and secret Thefts. A Servant never Cares to appear Slothful to his Master, because he knows it is a Quality that will never recommend him, and therefore chooses to exert his Vigour and Activity while he is by : He knows then what it is will please him, and what it is that is his Duty ; and therefore he ought, according to his Strength and Abilities, to be as active in his Absence. A Servant, when he enters into Service, gives up his Time and Labour, by Agreement, to his Master, in Consideration of what Wages, Keeping, and Protection he expects from him : And therefore he would be unjust to waste that Time, and spare that Labour, that is truly none of his ; they are his Master's by his Contract, and his Master ought to have the Advantage of them : It is defrauding of People of what is their due ; it is keeping back Part of what is already sold them, and agreed for ; and it would be full as just for a Master to detain Part of his Servant's Wages, contracted for, at the Year's End, as it is for a Servant to waste a great deal of that Time, and spare a great deal of that Labour, that was his Master's by Agreement : Because a Servant has no more Right to his Master's Money, than the Master has Right to his Servant's Time and Labour ; the one does not stand to his Bargain ; and therefore, and thereby, he sets the other at his Liberty. Justice is the rendering to all Men what is their due, and Injustice the detaining from any one what is their due.

Now whatever is due by Contract and Agreement from one Party to another, is generally due upon fulfilling such Terms and Conditions ; and if one Party fulfill the Terms and Conditions proposed by the other, he has a Right to all that is promised and engaged for on those Terms, and the other is unjust if he deny it. This makes it evident, that if a Servant Contract with a Master to give him all his Time and Labour, for such a space of Days or Weeks, or Months, or Years, and be as good as his Word, and stand to his Bargain ; he has an undoubted Right to whatever Wages or Advantage his Master agreed to let him have, and his Master would be a very wicked and unjust Man to deny him it ; because he earned it, and deserved it, and it was his due by Contract and Agreement. This is evident on the Servant's side ; but then it is as evident on the other Hand, that the Servant will have no more Right to his Master's Promise and Engagement, than he gains by performing the Conditions on which that Promise and Engagement stand ; and that the Master would not be unjust or wicked in refusing to pay him the Full, in Case it were fully proved, that he had not given that Time and Labour to his Service that he ought.

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This is but Justice; and if the Laws do not allow or countenance such Defalcations, and Detentions, it is, because they suppose and put the Servants so much into the Hands and Power of their Masters, that they may make, and see them fulfill their Contracts; and they are presumed to bear with, and indulge such waste of Time, and sparing of Labour, as would have been sufficient for their Business; and they must bear the Mischiefs and Inconveniencies, which they would not, though they might, prevent, either by constraining them to labour and perform their Duty, or by dismissing them, and having no more to do with them. It is not fit the Law should make the Masters Judges, whether the Servants shall have their Wages contracted for, when the Masters were at Liberty to contract, and might see whether the Servants could deserve them; and, in great Measure, make them earn them. But yet the Servants cannot help seeing, that it would be but just and reasonable for the Masters to deny them Part of their Wages, if they denied, and wronged their Masters of that Time and Labour to which their Wages were only due. And therefore idle and slothful Servants know they are unjust and false to their Agreement, when they mis-spend their Master's Time, and give him not that Labour which they owe to his Service.

And, that they may not be to seek, or troubled with much Scruples and Uncertainty, about the space and proportion of Time and Labour to be bestowed upon the Masters Service, let them consider a little, what they do in *Eye-service*, and when they would *please Men*: And though it would not be reasonable to expect they should continually exert such Vigour and Activity on all Occasions, as they do when they would shew themselves to best Advantage; yet it were fit to mend their Pace, although they made some tolerable Abatements: They know very well, there is a Difference betwixt the Extremities of Slothfulness, and the Quickness of *Eye-service*; and that the middle Way between them is most reasonable, and would suffice. A moderate and continued Labour has Advantages that Servants do not always think on; it makes their necessary Service, in Time, grow easy to them: It is so in all other Cases; continued and repeated Acts beget Habits, and Things habitual become easy and familiar to us; and constant and continued Labours do the like, if done with any sort of Moderation. When Strength and Pains are duly and discreetly proportioned out, they beget a Sort of Activity in People, that will not long bear Rest and Idleness, but puts them upon Labour and Employment: And therefore it is truly for the Ease and Interest of Servants to bestir themselves, as well as to the Profit of their Masters, and the Discharge of their own Duties to them. It makes their Pains and Labour grow, in Time, easy and well to be endured by them, and begets in them such an habitual Activity, as will in good Time stand them in great stead, when they come to be at Liberty, and at their own Disposal. Then they will see and feel the Benefit of having been good Servants; they will reap the Fruits of all that Industry, and Care, and Labour, which they exercised in the Service of their Masters; *i. e.* they will now be Industrious, Careful, and Laborious for themselves, and in their own Concerns, by having long been used to be so in their Masters. It will sometimes be otherwise; but this is the most natural and most usual Consequence.

They, who have served their Masters with the greatest Industry and Diligence, will certainly serve themselves the best, when they come to it: They will not only begin with greater Interest and better Credit, but, in all likelihood, they will go on with more Success: There is all the Reason in the World to think they should: That Application of Mind, and Disposition of Body to labour and take pains, which they have long exercised, will not now forsake them, but rather be increased and raised by the Consideration, that the Fruits of them will now be gathered by them-



selves, and come home. The Desire of thriving and succeeding in their Callings, is not so sure and near a Way to the doing so, as the being Laborious and Industrious in them is; for the Desire of thriving can only quicken Men, and put them upon Industry and Labour; it shews them the Means that are necessary to that End, but they may still know this, and still desire, without obtaining it; whereas the Men, that are already both Industrious and Laborious, seldom want the Desire of succeeding, and find they are already in the right Way: This partly gives Account why many Servants, when they become Masters, succeed so ill, notwithstanding their Desires and Aims of growing rich, and thriving, because they have not used themselves to industry and labour, and cannot take those Pains that are truly necessary to the doing well. They may have Skill and Artifice enough, and may be frugal and good Husbands; but those Things will not do, without great Industry and Labour in their several Ways; which will not come when they are called for, and found necessary, but must have been laid up before by Use and Custom: Experience therefore teaches this, as well as Reason, that the better Servants any People are to their Masters, the better they will certainly succeed, when they come to manage their own Concerns: And one would think, this very Consideration should prevail with young People, to be as Careful and Industrious as they well can, whilst with their Masters, that they may find the Advantage of it in good Time themselves.

There is an absolute Necessity of being Careful, Diligent, Industrious and Laborious, if Men have any Aim at living easily and well, and thriving in the World; and these Qualifications are never to be attained by any one, but by Use and Custom, and being trained up to them by a constant and continued Practice; which is to be begun when People are Young, their Minds susceptible of Impressions, and pliable to Heedfulness and Application, and their Limbs flexible to labour: This is the Time and Season of making Industry and Labour habitual to them. All the Care they take, and the Pains they are at, are truly for their own Service at the last; all the Skill and Understanding they get, is a Treasure for themselves: And if their Masters should permit them to continue Ignorant and Slothful, it would be so much to their Loss and Mischief; they would not only serve *them* much the Worse, but they would be so much Sufferers *themselves*; they would lose their Time, and be unfit for their Employments: And therefore too indulgent and remiss Masters do never make good Servants, and they will never deserve to find them thankful for such Easiness. For when the Servants come to be necessitated to industry and labour, by some unusual Urgencies, or by the Necessity of their Condition, they are perfectly to seek, and at a Loss what to do. These are some of the Inconveniences of Eye-service, of Idleness and Sloth, and Waste of Time, which every Servant should do well to think on. They are injurious to themselves, make them incapable of answering the Designs of their Parents or Friends, in putting them to Trades and Callings, and of their own Designs of living handsomely and suitably to their Condition in the World; and occasion them, at the same Time, to be bad Servants, and to defraud their Masters of that Time and Labour which is truly due to them, and which they have agreed themselves to give them; and therefore they are false and unjust, when they deny or take them from them. And though the Masters have a Power, by Punishment and by Restraint, to make the Servants do their Duty and their Business, and do not exercise it on them, and might be therefore (as they are in Law) presumed to rest contented with what is done; yet ought not this to satisfy the Conscience of the Servant, who knows he is remiss and negligent in his Master's Concerns; for his Master is all the While deceived, either believing his Business well done, when it is not; or knowing it is not done, when he might



might reasonably expect and require it should be done by the Servant ; by either of which Ways, the Servant is deceitful and unjust. And though the Master does not or will not take Notice of such Neglect, the Neglect and Offence is nevertheless in the Servant ; he has not done his Duty, and he is bound to do better for the Time to come : He was to do his Duty, not in Eye-service, *but in Singleness of Heart*, in all Sincerity, *and fearing God*, without Regard had to what Notice his Master might take of his Performances ; but remembering what Obligations he lay under by his own Contract or Agreement, and knowing that he was evermore in God's Sight, who is the God of Justice, and who loves Truth and Sincerity. And there is nothing more likely both to make and keep Servants Good and Careful, than to consider that God commands them to be so, and will take Account whether or no they are so. And therefore, it signifies little to dissemble with Masters, and pay them with Eye-service, when God discerns and sees their Deceit and Falshood, knows their Hypocrisy and counterfeiting Care and Diligence, when at the Bottom they are truly negligent and careless of their Masters Business.

It would not be true, to tell them that every Fit of Idleness and Sloth were faulty before God, and that all Loss of Time were *Sinful* ; for it is not so, something of that kind is unavoidable : But they must needs indulge as little as possible to them ; it will in Time become a Fault, and lead to Sin, that, seldom practised, may be innocent enough ; and no way better to prevent it, than remembering, that in the Main, their Industry and Diligence, and Labours are contracted for, and hired out ; and that too great a Waste and Consumption of Time, either in Negligence, or minding other Matters than they should, is so much Loss and Injury to those, whose Business should employ and take it up. This Principle should be settled in the Minds of Servants ; but it should be in General, and without Scruple, so as the Mind should not be made too nice and tender by it ; but so as to quicken them to make Amends, by new and greater Care and Diligence at one Time, for what is wanting at another, by the Surprise of Sloth, and Fits of Listlessness ; that, in the whole, they may be satisfied that they have done no Injury, but will discharge the Duty of their Office, and the Trust they undertook. This is also the Case, in great Measure, of the hired Servants ; as well as of those of the better Sort, who are also Servants, but tied with other Bonds. These ought to know, because they are not always Young, and Heedless, but of Years, Staidness and Experience : They know, or ought to know, that all the Time and Labour that is due to the Discharge of what they undertake, is certainly theirs, who pay them for it ; and therefore are obliged in Reason and Justice to give it them. Neither do they want Encouragements to excite their Industry and Labour, for they subsist by Credit and good Fame ; and nothing gives it, or secures it, like the being Diligent and Careful, Industrious and Laborious in their Service. This appears even by *Eye-service*, which gets them the good Name they seek for, and by which they Live, till they are laid open and discovered : The *Appearance* even of Care and Industry is profitable to them ; and therefore, to be sure, the Thing it self would serve them most effectually, and recommend them to such Favour and Good-liking as they want in their Condition.

And let them also add to all these natural Rewards, the Hopes of pleasing God by such their conscientious Industry and Labour, and they will want no more Encouragement to set about it ; and that is certainly the Truth of the Matter : The Promises of God's Favour here, and, in due Time, Reward hereafter, are affixed to the Discharge of the Duty of Servants, as fully as they are to the Discharge of the Duty of any other Relation whatsoever, either Natural or Civil ; *they serve the Lord Christ*, and are advised *to do what they do, as to the Lord ; knowing that of the Lord they shall receive the Reward of Inheritance*. And this they would do well to keep in constant Memory ;



Memory ; for this will amply Recompence the greatest Labour, Care, and Industry that they can take. But of this I am to speak at large, when I have spoken to Truth and Faithfulness, and other good Qualities that are required of Servants.

## DISCOURSE XV.

COLOSSIANS III. VERSES 22, 23, 24.

*Servants, obey in all Things your Masters according to the Flesh ; not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in Singleness of Heart, fearing God : And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men : Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the Reward of the Inheritance ; for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

**H**A VING shewn, that Servants were commanded by God to obey their Masters, in all Things, where they were at Liberty by his own Laws, and by the Laws of their Superiours ; and to perform their several Contracts and Agreements, to discharge all that they undertook to do, with Care, and Diligence, and Faithfulness, and Honesty ; and to be in all Respects as good Servants, as they would sometimes shew themselves, and appear to be to their Masters ; knowing they were always in God's Sight, who will as certainly punish false and bad Servants, as he has promised to reward the Good and Faithful : I had only Time to shew the Servants, that having given their Time and Labour to their Masters, by Agreement, for so much Profit and Advantage, Wages, Keeping, and Protection, as they thought them Worth, or they could get ; they would be unrighteous and unjust to waste that Time unprofitably, in Idleness and Sloth, and to be unreasonably sparing of that Labour, that were truly none of *theirs*, but their *Masters*, who paid them for them ; and added some few Motives farther to their Diligence and Industry, and Labour. I am now to proceed, and shew them, that they are also to discharge their Duty, and their Undertaking, with all Faithfulness and Honesty, with all the Truth and Justice in the World. They are hereby obliged to be as frugal and good Husbands for their Masters, as they can with Innocence and Honesty ; and they are obliged to defraud them of Nothing.

*First*, Servants are obliged to be as frugal and good Husbands for their Masters, as they can with Innocence and Honesty, because they are to be every way as useful to them as is possible. This is the End and Intention of all Masters in entertaining Servants : They cannot do all Things necessary themselves, therefore they trust others to do what is wanting ; they cannot always be at Home, and yet their Business must not be neglected : They cannot always be abroad, and yet their Business may require Attendance ; therefore they entertain others to supply their Defects, that nothing may be wanting. But none of all these Ends are answered, where Faithfulness and Honesty are wanting : The Master's Absence is not at all supplied, where the Servant does not act as the Master would if he were present ; and the Master stays at Home to his Loss, if his Servant, he employs Abroad, be false and faithless. It is therefore evident, that the very Reason of being entertained as



a Servant, implies a faithful, just, and honest Mind, one that can be trusted with the Master's Concerns, and transact in his Behalf as far as he permits him to go. He is to represent his Master when absent, and to be as sollicitous for his Advantage, as it is presumed he would himself be; and when he is not so, he fails in Part of his Duty, he does not so well discharge his Trust as he should.

No Servant is to be unjust, or hard, or unreasonable in Behalf of his Master; he is not, for his sake, to impose upon the Ignorance, Simplicity, or want of Skill of those he deals with: He must no more think of recommending himself to his Master's Favour by over-reaching and deceiving *others*, than he must deceive or be unfaithful to his *Master*: He is bound to be as useful to him as he can; but he must continue innocent and honest himself, he must reconcile the being serviceable to his Master with his own Good. And therefore, no Masters must encourage such a Humour or Mistake in Servants, by shewing themselves pleased, or content with any unjust Advantages they may have made in their Absence; but must give them leave to deal no otherwise than they would deal themselves: They must not countenance or cherish such Proceedings in their Servants, as they would be ashamed of in themselves, and would not appear to have a Hand in; because they encourage thereby Injustice in another, and by Connivance make it their own Act and Deed. And if a Servant be wise, he will, for his own sake, make his Master's Rule *his* Rule of demanding; for if that should be unreasonable, yet it is none of the Servant's Fault; he is not guilty of the Hardship or Injustice, it is his Master's; whereas, if Servants take a Liberty to set a higher Price than their own Masters set, who know their Business best, they may, as it may happen, draw an unnecessary Guilt upon their own Heads, and be unjust and exacting to their Masters Profit, and their own Hazard: They must therefore be as good Husbands for their Masters, as they can with Innocence and Honesty be; but no farther.

In the next Place, a Servant is obliged to be as little wasteful and profuse of his Master's Goods and Substance, as is possible: He is tied to do him all the Good he can, and therefore, to be sure, no Mischief: Now all Waste and Profusion unnecessary, is so much Loss and Damage, and therefore to be avoided; it is just so much Injury done to those who should be rather profited by them. And to keep themselves right in this Matter, let them consider how they would behave themselves in *Eye-service*, and whilst trying to *please Men*. Let them, in the Absence of their Masters, behave themselves as carefully and frugally, as they would if they were present; or be as wasteful and profuse under the Sight and Knowledge of their Masters, as they are when they are ignorant and absent, and they may take their Approbation for Consent. But to appear frugal and careful in their Masters Sight, and in their Absence to be wasteful and profuse, is not only Eye-service and Hypocrisy, but Falshood and Injustice. It is doing their Masters Mischief, whilst they believe they are well served. This is a Matter Servants are not so much aware of as they should be: They think it well enough, if they do not directly and plainly defraud their Masters of their Money, or their Substance; whereas there is little difference betwixt a luxurious and profuse Waste of their Masters Goods, which is not allowed them, and defrauding them of something positively: The Masters are so much poorer, and are forced to be at so much greater Charge, than they expected to be; the Servants allow themselves more than the Masters think they can, or should afford them, and the Masters pay for that Profusion; and if it be unreasonable, it does not want much of a Civil sort of Theft. If indeed it be so, that a sordid Spirit will not make such Allowance as is fit and reasonable to be made, it will be innocent enough to take what is Convenient, though it be reckoned Waste and Profusion by incompetent Judges; though it were better to forsake such Service,



than act against the Master's Will and Order : But in all such Cases, where there is no necessity of this Nature, Waste and Profusion are faulty, and against the Duty of good Servants ; it is what they never think fit to discover, but dissemble and conceal ; they know it is not pleasing to any Master, and consequently know it ought not to be done by them.

*Lastly*, All Servants are to be exactly, Just and Honest, and neither to take away their Masters Money, or their Goods, any farther than they are reasonably presumed to owe them. It is of all Thefts the worst, because it carries with it a *Breach of Trust* : From Violence and Fraud Men are to guard themselves with Weapons, and their Wits ; they are to look after themselves ; they are threatned, and are bound to be aware, and wakeful. But neither of these sort of Robbers have engaged especially to serve you Faithfully and Truly, or to do you no Injury, and therefore you depend not on them ; if they steal from you, they are only *Violent* and *Unjust*, they are not *False* and *Treacherous* : Whereas the Servants, having given their Faith, their Promise and Engagement to be just and honest, are therefore trusted and employed by Masters ; and therefore all their Thefts are also Treacheries, and are aggravated by the Trust that is reposed in them. They are greater Villains than other People that steal more, because they have bound themselves to be exactly Honest, and secure their Masters, to the best of their Abilities, from other People, and are the more confided in on that Account.

If a Servant kill his Master, or a Wife her Husband, or a Priest his Bishop, it is not accounted by the Laws a simple *Murder*, but a sort of *Treason*, because these Parties owe Faith and Allegiance to the other : Their Crimes are raised proportionably to the Obligations they lay under to those Superiours, and their Cruelty as great and provoking, as the Trust and Confidence reposed in such Relations was reasonable and just. It is much the same Thing in lesser Instances ; the Falseness and Perfidiousness of Friends, Relations, and such as are entrusted, raises their Injustice to as great a Height, as the Expectation of Faith and Honesty in them had been justly raised. And therefore, upon this Account, there is more Wickedness in the Theft of *Servants*, than in that of *Strangers* ; because it is (as is evident) accompanied with Breach of Trust, Falseness and Treachery, against which there is no guard.

Let therefore Servants, who at any Time find themselves under the Temptation of defrauding their Masters, Mistresses, or any else that trust them, consider but these few Things : *First*, That the Practice they are about, is evidently in itself very wicked. *Secondly*, That it is yet more wicked in them, because they are entrusted. *Thirdly*, That a Discovery of it here, is like to be their Ruin. And, *Lastly*, That, whether discovered or no, it will lie as a Burthen on the Conscience, and will require Repentance and Satisfaction : or, without them, be sorely punished, and avenged by God. *First*, The Practice they are venturing on, is evidently in itself wicked : It is Injustice to take from their Master what is his, and appropriate it to themselves, who have no Right to it. The first Principle of common Honesty, and indeed of all humane Converse, is that which our Saviour hath laid down in St. *Matth.* vii. 12. having first laid it down in all Men's Hearts, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, even so do to them.* Now Theft is a manifest Violation of this Principle ; it being certain, that no one can be willing that another should either take away, or detain from him what is his due, and to which the other has no Right. In this especially consists the Pravity of Theft, as indeed of all other human Acts, the doing that to another Knowingly and Willingly, which he believes is grievous and injurious to him, and which he would think unreasonable to suffer at the other's Hands : For here the Man does Mischief to another, against his own Conscience ; he defrauds his Neighbour of something that he likes, and knows at the same Time he should



should not do so ; which is an Offence against his Brother's Good, and against that Light that God hath placed in him, and every Man, to guide and direct his Practice by. So that whatever can make an Act wicked, is found in *Stealing* ; and it is not a Sin only because it is forbidden by God ; but it is forbidden by God, because it is directly a Sin against the Good and Quiet of Mankind, and would destroy all Right, and subvert the Order of the World. As little therefore as People think of it, whenever they invade another Man's Right, either privily or openly, by taking away his Substance or his Money, they are undermining and subverting the Foundation of every Man's Security, destroying mutual Trust and Confidence, injuring their Neighbour, sinning against their own Conscience, and offending against both Divine and Human Laws, and therefore needs must know that they do wickedly. *Secondly*, Servants, thus defrauding their Masters, are yet more wicked than other People doing the same Things, because they also betray a Trust, as I have before shewn you. They could not have an Opportunity of doing Mischief, but by the greatest Diffimulation and Treachery imaginable ; they counterfeit Justice, Truth and Honesty, and other good Qualities, by which they come to be trusted and confided in, and by this Trust and Confidence they are enabled to do Mischief, and do it. By how much the less such Villany is expected from them, so much more villanous such Practice is in them : But of this before. The *Third* Thing Servants should consider, when under any Temptations to steal, either to satisfy their covetous Desires, or feed their Wantonness and Luxury, is this, that a Discovery of it here is like to be their Ruin. Their very Livelihood does oftentimes depend upon their Credit ; their Faithfulness and Honesty are better to them, than their Hands and Feet ; and all their Skill and Industry, their Strength and their Abilities, would signify little, if they were famed for False and Unjust ; their other good Qualities would make them more suspected and avoided, rather than recommend them to Employment, if People could not trust them.

Masters will bear with many Defects of Skill and Diligence, where they are sure the Servants are exactly just and honest ; but where they know them false and unjust, they will have no Regard to industry and labour ; because they must be always on the Watch ; they must be looking still, that what they get them by their Industry and Labour, they should not lose by their Thievery ; they must be always on their guard against those, whose Business it is to secure them from those Fears. There is nothing so necessary to a Servant, as the Reputation of being just and honest ; nothing more certain to undo them, to all intents and purposes, than a bad Fame, and the Suspicion of false dealing with their Masters : And therefore, if they acted only upon *prudential* Considerations, and consulted their own Benefit, they should of all Things in the World be honest ; when a Servant steals, he undermines the very Ground he stands upon ; thinks he is only taking something from his Master, whilst he is taking away from himself the Means of his own Subsistence ; for when his Frauds are once discovered, he is absolutely ruined. It were therefore well, if such a Consideration as this were present to the Minds of Servants, under their Temptations to injustice and deceit : That there is all the Danger in the World of a Discovery of their Thefts, some Time or other ; and that whenever that is made, they shall, probably, be undone : And therefore, though their Wants and their Desires of what is none of theirs be very great and pressing, for the present, yet had they better go without it, even in point of Profit ; because the Knowledge of such Fraud and Theft will quite disable them from ever making an Advantage more, by making them incapable of farther Service ; for who will entertain a Thief and Villain ? This is so sure a Consequence of Falshood in a Servant, that they have nothing to depend upon, but the Hopes of lying concealed, and that their Thefts will never be discovered ; which Hopes  
are



are yet so often disappointed, that very few, who have for any Time been guilty of this Practice, do altogether escape the Notice of their Masters: The Reputation of Servants is so dear and valuable, that many Masters will not charge them downright with that Sin, who yet are well enough assured themselves that they are guilty of it: And others have all Cause to suspect, but for prudential Reasons never will accuse: And others see it well enough, but would not irritate too far, and make their Servants desperate by the Publication; hoping it will proceed no farther, but that the Grace of God will influence them to honesty and justice, and they will see the Folly and Naughtiness of all such Courses. Few Servants of any Note, or Continuance, walk so invisible and in the Clouds, in any of these wicked Practices, as they imagine; the Eyes of their Superiours are often on them, when they little think of it. And they will be deceived, if they think that all are *ignorant*, who are *silent*; and that they are secure and unsuspected, because they are not charged or accused. This is the Rule that hired Servants may reasonably enough measure their Safety by: These Methods of Indulgence and Forbearance would not be altogether so discreetly used by Masters, with respect to *them* who are so moveable and fugitive, and ought not to be born with for a Moment in their wicked Frauds; but they are proper enough with respect to Servants of a better Rank, and who are tied by Covenants to abide with them for Years. It is sometimes a Piece of Charity, to endeavour, by a prudent Connivance and Concealment of their Faults of this kind, to reclaim them; because the divulging of them is likely enough to ruin them for ever, either by hardning them in Sin, or taking away their Credit, so that they never can be trusted or employed by any other. But this Concealment is to be so prudently managed, that it shall not by any means encourage them to proceed in any such wicked Ways; it would be well that Light enough should be let in upon the Servants, to let them see, it is possible their Masters may have some Notice of their Practice, and yet not enough to convince them, that they actually know all: The Certainty of being discovered, may either harden them, and make them impudent, or may discourage them too much, and kill their Industry and Vigour quite; whereas a light Suspicion may promote that Industry and Vigour, and give new Life, and set them on endeavouring, with new Diligence and Honesty, to make indeed amends for what is past, and to remove all Causes of Suspicion (as the Servants fancy) for the Future: And to the helping on this good Design, the Masters must not fail of frequently commending to those Servants, Faithfulness and Honesty, and true and just Proceedings; for, by these means, they do their Duty, and tell the Servants of their Faults at the same Time.

But, *Lastly*, Let the Servants consider, that whether or no this Discovery be made to *Men* of their Injustice and Falshood, yet *God* sees them continually; they are always open to his Eye; and their false Practice will always be a Burthen on their Conscience; they must repent and make amends, or they will certainly be punished in the other World: This Consideration would prevent all Frauds and evil Practices in Servants, and keep them Just and Honest. What will it signify to conceal your Thefts and Falshood from your Masters, and appear Honest, when your own Heart assures you, you are false and wicked; and when your Conscience tells you, that God, who is to judge you at the last Day, knows you exactly; and that you cannot stray, even in a Thought, but he discerns, and marks it down? Try to conceal your Falshood from your self, and to corrupt your Memory from giving Evidence against you, that you may be at Peace and Quiet whilst you rob your Master: Use all your Art and Diligence to make your self believe, that what you take from him is yours, and that you have a Right and Title to it; that notwithstanding you dare not let him see you take the least Sum of Money, or smallest Quantity of Goods that is, yet he is willing you should do all that you do, and is consenting



senting: Do but try to make these Things easy to you, before you begin, and then you will not so much Regard whether God sees or no, nor be so apprehensive of him, if he do.

But it is a Madness for you to venture upon stealing, purely in hopes of lying hid from one Man's Eyes, when at the same Time you know your self you are false, and know that God sees and knows so too; and that the Torment of Guilt arises from a Man's own Conscience, and the Fear of Punishment from God's being Witness, as he is to be the Avenger of your secret Villanies. With the Fruits of your Injustice, you may gratify some vain or wicked Longing for the present; but when that is over, the Mind is immediately concerned, vexed, and disquieted at what is done; wishes it had been let alone, is afraid of Shame and Discovery, and knows that Fact must be repented of: This is much more uneasy than the Disappointment and Denial of those vain Desires had been at first. To have the Mind perpetually burthened with the Remembrance of its Guilt, to live under constant Reproaches of Conscience, for having wronged and defrauded one's Master, who deserved no such Usage, must needs be a greater Trouble, than it could be to have wanted that Content and Satisfaction which was purchased by those Thefts. And therefore, it is but a sad Bargain that a false Servant drives, that for so little Profit gives away the Peace and Quiet of his Mind. He knows that God sees him, and knows that he hath threatned to punish Falshood and Injustice with severe Punishment; yet this he also ventures. He is, and with Reason enough, afraid of the Shame or Punishment, that might follow a Discovery of his Sins, from his Master here on Earth; but is not terrified enough, even with the Certainty of God's discerning him continually, and Resolution of punishing all such wicked People. It were but fit he should be more afraid of him, who can cast both Soul and Body into Hell-fire.

These are some of the Considerations that would stand Servants in the greatest stead, if they were present to their Minds; they would shew them the Baseness and Unworthiness, as well as the Wickedness and Danger of being faithless and dishonest Servants; and that would be the likeliest Means of keeping them just and exact. The *Third* and *Last* Thing to be spoken to, is the Reason, Ground, and Foundation of the Servants paying all Obedience, and due Service to their Masters; *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the Reward of the Inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.* A good Servant may not only promise himself the Natural, and the usual Rewards of an industrious, careful, just and faithful Service from his earthly Master, and the rest of the World; but also the Reward of the Inheritance at God's Hands, *for he serves the Lord Christ*; one who, in the Form of a Servant, disdained not to live and die for the meanest of Mankind; who hath promised God's Favour, both here and hereafter, to such as do their Duties in the meanest Stations faithfully and truly; and one who is enabled to perform his Promises to them. Good Service does, like other good Performances, pay itself in great measure; it carries its Reward with it; it gains the Favour and Esteem of all People; Care and Diligence, and Faith and Honesty, make their Service very acceptable, and consequently very easy to themselves, and recommend them upon all Occasions: Those good Qualities raise them above their Fortune, and give them Reputation and Good-will, that make amends for the Meanness of their Condition. They give them Credit, moreover, with all that know them; they, who have served their Masters honestly and well, have laid to themselves a good Foundation for their own Self-Subsistence, when they have occasion: The Neighbourhood will remember still their Diligence and Honesty, and promote their Good, by giving a good Report of them; they will be forwarded by all, and trusted more than others of



are yet so often disappointed, that very few, who have for any Time been guilty of this Practice, do altogether escape the Notice of their Masters: The Reputation of Servants is so dear and valuable, that many Masters will not charge them downright with that Sin, who yet are well enough assured themselves that they are guilty of it: And others have all Cause to suspect, but for prudential Reasons never will accuse: And others see it well enough, but would not irritate too far, and make their Servants desperate by the Publication; hoping it will proceed no farther, but that the Grace of God will influence them to honesty and justice, and they will see the Folly and Naughtiness of all such Courses. Few Servants of any Note, or Continuance, walk so invisible and in the Clouds, in any of these wicked Practices, as they imagine; the Eyes of their Superiours are often on them, when they little think of it. And they will be deceived, if they think that all are *ignorant*, who are *silent*; and that they are secure and unsuspected, because they are not charged or accused. This is the Rule that hired Servants may reasonably enough measure their Safety by: These Methods of Indulgence and Forbearance would not be altogether so discreetly used by Masters, with respect to *them* who are so moveable and fugitive, and ought not to be born with for a Moment in their wicked Frauds; but they are proper enough with respect to Servants of a better Rank, and who are tied by Covenants to abide with them for Years. It is sometimes a Piece of Charity, to endeavour, by a prudent Connivance and Concealment of their Faults of this kind, to reclaim them; because the divulging of them is likely enough to ruin them for ever, either by hardning them in Sin, or taking away their Credit, so that they never can be trusted or employed by any other. But this Concealment is to be so prudently managed, that it shall not by any means encourage them to proceed in any such wicked Ways; it would be well that Light enough should be let in upon the Servants, to let them see, it is possible their Masters may have some Notice of their Practice, and yet not enough to convince them, that they actually know all: The Certainty of being discovered, may either harden them, and make them impudent, or may discourage them too much, and kill their Industry and Vigour quite; whereas a light Suspicion may promote that Industry and Vigour, and give new Life, and set them on endeavouring, with new Diligence and Honesty, to make indeed amends for what is past, and to remove all Causes of Suspicion (as the Servants fancy) for the Future: And to the helping on this good Design, the Masters must not fail of frequently commending to those Servants, Faithfulness and Honesty, and true and just Proceedings; for, by these means, they do their Duty, and tell the Servants of their Faults at the same Time.

But, *Lastly*, Let the Servants consider, that whether or no this Discovery be made to *Men* of their Injustice and Falshood, yet *God* sees them continually; they are always open to his Eye; and their false Practice will always be a Burthen on their Conscience; they must repent and make amends, or they will certainly be punished in the other World: This Consideration would prevent all Frauds and evil Practices in Servants, and keep them Just and Honest. What will it signify to conceal your Thefts and Falshood from your Masters, and appear Honest, when your own Heart assures you, you are false and wicked; and when your Conscience tells you, that God, who is to judge you at the last Day, knows you exactly; and that you cannot stray, even in a Thought, but he discerns, and marks it down? Try to conceal your Falshood from your self, and to corrupt your Memory from giving Evidence against you, that you may be at Peace and Quiet whilst you rob your Master: Use all your Art and Diligence to make your self believe, that what you take from him is yours, and that you have a Right and Title to it; that notwithstanding you dare not let him see you take the least Sum of Money, or smallest Quantity of Goods that is, yet he is willing you should do all that you do, and is consenting



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greater Skill, and deeper Insight. Faithfulness and Honesty give Servants better Credit, than Industry and Labour; because that People naturally expect a Blessing should attend them; they think, and not without some Reason, that God is interested in their Favour and Behalf; they will rather leave room for Providence, and trust to honesty and justice, than favour the Skilful and Industrious, although they know no harm by them, but are not certain of the other good Qualities: But when they are all joined, there is then no Question of their doing well.

These are Considerations that may help to alleviate their Misfortunes, and make their Condition easy to them. And, in truth, it is so well and wisely ordered by God, that every Condition of Life has something to make it not only tolerable, but comfortable enough, if People be not wanting to themselves; but will be Careful, Honest and Religious, and discharge the Duties of it as they should. The State of Servitude is accounted the Meanest and the most Miserable of all others: but yet it is to be made easy, though not eligible. Servants may have more of the *Labours* of Life, but then they have less of the *Cares*, than other People; their *Bodies* are more fatigued and exercised, but their *Minds* are less perplexed: They are only concerned in *one* Matter, to do the Work that lies before them, whilst others have a *World* of Things to think on, and look after. *They* have their Masters only to please; their Masters, may be, are to court and humour all they deal with: They, generally speaking, have themselves alone to provide for; their Masters have Wives and Children, and Relations. Whatever Scarcity or Dearth happens, *they* find but little Alteration; whatever publick Mischiefs oppress a Nation, they feel but little of them: Changes of Government affect not them, that, may be, quite undo and overthrow their Masters: They contribute little to the supporting of the Publick, pay no Rates nor Taxes; lose no gainful Employments, suffer nothing by the Malice, or Insolence of Parties, undergo no Odium, Calumny or Slander: In a Word, they are less distressed and straitned, suffer less Hardships and Misfortunes, than any sort of People else above them. These are Conveniencies that generally attend Servants of the lowest Condition; and which they would do well to reflect on, now and then, as well to keep them the more Easy, as to make them the more Thankful, and that they might the better discern the Kindness of God's Providence in ordering Matters so, that, with these Advantages, their Condition, however mean and low it is to all Appearance, is yet upon the Square, for Ease and Happiness of Mind, with that of many of their Masters.

But when, to all these natural Rewards, and these Advantages, some of them usual, and some inseparable from their Condition of Life, we also add *the Reward of their Inheritance* promised by God to the Careful and Industrious, the faithful, just, and honest Discharge of the Duty of Servants, there can be nothing wanting to excite them to a due Performance of it.

Let them, therefore, for their Comfort and Encouragement, think upon these Things. The State of Servitude is absolutely necessary, by the Order and Appointment of the wise Creator and Disposer of all Things: The World could not be governed and maintained without it; and it is fallen to their Share, to be instrumental to the publick Good in that Station; not for their *own*, nor for the Sins of their Fathers, but by that Uncertainty of Affairs that God, for wise and good, but undiscovered Reasons, permits to be in the World: It is no Token of his Anger and Displeasure, for he is willing they should avoid and fly that Fortune by their Industry and Care; and blesses them with Opportunities, and gives them the same Abilities, and natural Faculties, he gives the Governors and Princes of the World: It is not, therefore, any Sign of his Displeasure, that they are born, or become Servants; but so it happens, that they *are* so, and may free themselves from being so



as soon as they can : He only commands them, that whilst they continue so, they should behave themselves as becomes their Condition, with all Submission and all Humility, with all Obedience, Diligence and Industry, with Truth and Justice, Faithfulness and Honesty ; which will make their Condition easy to themselves, and cause them to be well served by others, whenever they emerge and get above it. But to shew how acceptable it is to him, and (because it is so necessary and useful to the World) to encourage it, he promises, that they, who behave themselves well in this Life, as *Servants*, shall be looked upon, and treated as *Children*, in the Life to come ; they shall have *the Reward of Inheritance*, which is, what properly belongs to God's Children. They may make themselves as happy as they can in this World, and the doing their Duty well is the most likely means of being so. But however that happen, God will not fail of making them Happy hereafter ; if they perform their Duty here, he will reward their Labours with eternal Rest and Quiet, and their Faith and Honesty with Rewards that never fail ; they shall be happy in the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, whatever Hardships, Trouble and Uneasiness they undergo, whatever want of Necessaries or Conveniencies they suffer ; whatever Severities or cruel Inflictions they endure *here*, by the undue Rigour of their Masters and Superiours ; *there* they shall have Amends and Satisfaction made them in most ample Manner : When once their Service is accomplished, they shall receive double at the Lord's Hands for all their Sufferings, and their undeserved Misfortunes. Let them support themselves, under the Worst of their Condition, with this Hope and Expectation, and make it but a *reasonable* Hope, and a *well-grounded* Expectation, by discharging their Duty carefully and honestly as they should, and then they will live easily ; they will have the Earnest of Heaven in a good Conscience before-hand, and Live and be more Happy than their Masters, if they are not also good Men.

There are two Things in this Divine Conduct worthy the Remarking : *First*, That no Duty of Life, if well discharged, will go without Reward : It is not enough, that to be a good Relation in all respects, will make Men happy naturally, if all the World would do their Duty ; for if all Men did their Duty to each other, all Men would be Happy : But because some People will be Foolish and Unreasonable, some Ill-natured and Perverse, some obstinately Wicked and Unjust ; and by these means a great many Duties be neglected, slighted and defied, to the great Damage and Mischief of others, to their Misfortune and great Suffering ; and that it is but natural, and seems reasonable, for one Party to neglect and omit the Duty which they owe *to* others, when they can see no tolerable Returns of what Duty is due to them *from* others : Because of this, because that such Omissions and Neglects are prejudicial to the Peace and Welfare of the World, God promises Rewards in another Life to the faithful and religious Dischargers of their Duties here, that will make amends for what is denied them here by Men's Unreasonableness or Malice, their Ingratitude or their great Wickedness ; so that no one need to be discouraged now, as though his Labours would be in Vain. Good Subjects may have lawless Governours, and good Children unnatural Parents, and good Wives unkind and faithless Husbands, and good Servants hard and unreasonable Masters : And so on the other Hand, these several Superiours may have their corresponding Inferiours all as naught : But the Good of Mankind requires, that all these mutual Duties should be well performed ; and yet to do Good for Evil, is a huge Discouragement, and all these Duties would not be performed, unless Men had a hopeful Prospect of some Recompence, somewhere or other, to excite them to discharge them, and support them whilst so doing. This Prospect God lays open to all the World, by giving them the hopes of Heaven ; that happy Country, of which, they who will be  
his



his Children, in Obedience, shall, for Reward thereof, be made Inheritors, and Heirs for ever.

The *other Thing* worthy Remark, is this, that whatever Difference and Distinction God commands or permits to be amongst Men, yet the greatest Favours and Blessings, the truest Dignities and Honours are common to all ; and those are Graces and Virtues here, and Happiness in Heaven hereafter. All Men cannot possibly be Great and Honourable, nor be possessed of Places of Advantage ; all Men never can be rich ; all Men cannot be Governours and Masters, nor great Traders, nor remarkable in any Faculty : But all Men may be Just and Honest, Virtuous and Religious ; all Men may live in God's Favour in this World, and may thereby be Happy in the other : All Men cannot have Houses or Lands, Estates and Honours here ; but all may have their everlasting Dwellings, Houses not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. All Men may be Partakers of those Blessings, which God, who knows us best, knows fittest for us ; which he assures us are the truest Blessings, which make and keep us Happiest here, and which he has designed to Crown us with hereafter. This is no little Thing for Servants to consider, that however Mean and Despicable their Condition may appear in the Sight of Men ; yet that, in God's Eyes, who understands the Value of his Creatures best, they are of equal worth with the Great and Noble ; that he has given them Bodies full as beautiful and useful, Faculties of Mind as fine and good ; made them as capable of being Virtuous, and exercising Graces, has redeemed them by the same precious Blood of Christ, opened the same Gates of Heaven, and prepared for them the same Glory. Only they must behave themselves wisely and well in their Condition, and as becomes those *that serve the Lord Christ, i. e.* who profess themselves Christians. He is the common Master of the whole World, and it is to him his Servants must look up : Him they must first and principally obey ; and, under him, their several Masters and Superiours, as he gives them Order and Command : It is he to whom the Father has committed all Power ; the Dispensation of Rewards and Punishments is in his Hands ; and it is by his Commands and Rules, that he will judge the World in Righteousness : Accordingly as Men obey his Laws, and discharge the several Duties of this Life, in their distinct Relations, they shall fare in the other, whether they be High or Low, Great or Small, Rich or Poor, Bond or Free, Master or Servant ; *for with him there is no respect of Persons.*

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## DISCOURSE XVI.

### COLOSSIANS IV. VERSE I.

*Masters, give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven.*

**S**T. Paul, in delivering the Duties that Superiours owe to their Inferiours, is very careful to preserve the Decorum of Things ; and generally uses such Terms as might seem to imply, that the Discharge of *their* Part is a Matter of mere Grace and Favour, rather than of Debt or Justice : *Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the Evil. Husbands, love your Wives. Fathers, provoke*  
not



*not your Children to Wrath. Masters, give unto your Servants that which is Just and Equal.* Whereas, to all Inferiours he speaks in a commanding louder Tone, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers: Wives submit your selves to your own Husbands: Children obey your Parents in all Things; and Servants obey your Masters in all Things.* But yet it would be a wrong Inference, that any one should make from hence, that therefore St. Paul intends to bind Inferiours to *their* Duties closelier and stronglier than Superiours to *theirs*; for his Purpose is to bind them both alike to the Discharge of all they owe: Only, the Nature of their several Duties requires a different Carriage and Behaviour in the Manner of discharging them; and indeed, the Way and Manner is sometimes Part of the Duty.

There is nothing more certain than that Superiours are obliged as much in Reason and Justice, and by God's Commands, to discharge what they owe to their Inferiours, as Inferiours are to discharge what they owe to their Superiours. For every Relation being built, and depending on a Contract, either supposed in Nature and Reason, or actually agreed upon and made betwixt the Parties related, upon what Terms they found Convenient; it must needs be, that each Party is equally obliged to perform his Part of the Contract, upon which the Relation stands: For Justice and Religion know no Difference of Parties or Relations; with Them (as with their everlasting Fountain) there is no Respect of Persons: They only have Regard to what the Agreement is, and how it is performed. These Things have been fully spoken to, in considering the several Relations People stand to one another in; and therefore, having urged the Duty of Servants to their Masters, from Reason and God's Commands, it is but fit the Masters should be put in Mind of what they owe their Servants, and that I choose to do from the Words of St. Paul in the Text; *Masters, give unto your Servants that which is Just and Equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven.* In which Words we have to consider, *First*, What is to be understood by *Just and Equal*. *Secondly*, The Reason here assigned, why Masters should give to their Servants *that which is Just and Equal*; and that is, the Knowledge they have, that *they also have a Master in Heaven*.

*First*, What is to be understood by *Just and Equal*. It is not indeed necessary, that when two or more Epithets of pretty near the same Sense and Signification are attributed to one and the same Thing or Person, there should be a different Sense sought out for each Epithet: The Scriptures use a great many Words to signify the same Thing, but to signify it with more Force, and to make the deeper Impression on the Mind of the Reader; and so do all other Books as well as that; and so do all Men in their common Conversation, and cannot possibly avoid it: It does not signify that they intend to say different Things, when they say that such a one is an *Honest* and a *Good* Man; they make no Difference in their Minds betwixt an *Honest* and a *Good* Man, but they would only have it believed that he is *either*; and either of them serves their turn; and the using of both, is only to shew they are in earnest. And so there is no absolute Necessity, that to deal *justly* and *equally*, should signify different Things, but only *very* justly or *very* equally: But if there be any Difference intended by St. Paul, then it may be reasonable to think, that when Masters are bidden to be just, or to give *that which is just to their Servants*, they are bidden to give them that which is theirs by Contract and Agreement, that which is due in Law, as being bargained for, upon such and such Terms: And when they are bidden to give them that which is *equal*, they are bidden to deal fairly, honestly, and kindly with them, to give them what is their due in Reason and Conscience, although they have not formally contracted with them; to use them as well as other People, merciful and just, are supposed to use *theirs*, and as well as it may be supposed the Servants



would have agreed for, had they suspected otherwise : In a Word, to look upon themselves as much obliged in Reason and Conscience, as they would be by Bond and solemn Contract.

It is plain, there may be a great deal of Difference betwixt *Justice* and *Equity*, if Men so please : Whilst they make their Contracts and Agreements the Measure of *Justice* ; and Reason and Conscience the Rule of determining what is *equal*. In this Difference, we may well consider the Duty of Masters as somewhat different in being *just*, and being *equal* : And *first*, they are commanded to be *just*, to stand to their Agreements, to give their Servants what they have contracted for, whether it be Instruction, Wages, Maintenance or Cloathing, or whatever else is bargained for. Undoubtedly, whatever is agreed for, is in Justice due ; and therefore, whatsoever Information or Instruction is requisite to qualify a Servant for the Calling and Profession he pretends to, is to be given him, as his due, and cannot be with-holden from him ; it is the End which Servants of that sort propose and aim at, and the very Reason of putting themselves into a State of Servitude : It is that for which especially they Contract ; for which they give their Money, Time, and Labour ; and therefore it is a Piece of great Injustice, to conceal the Skill that properly belongs to them, and is to make them Masters of their Calling : They cannot answer to their Contract, without the letting their Servants into the full Knowledge of their Business, according to the Measure of their Understanding and Capacity ; it is as much their due, as their daily Food, and detained with equal, if not greater Injury.

A Master therefore is both faithless and unjust, that either, through Design, Envy or Carelessness, suffers his Servant to continue ignorant and unskilful in the Way of his Profession, which he agreed and covenanted to make him understand ; he breaks his Covenant, and answers not his Trust, by keeping back the Skill that is necessary to make his Servant what he aims at. The Servant is all the while deceived, and loses the only Thing he bargained for, expected, and desired, and for which he pledged his Faith and Service. This is *one* way of refusing to give to Servants *that which is just*, and that a very great and mischievous one.

*Another* is of denying them their Wages, the with-holding back the Price and Reward of their Service, that which they bargained and agreed for ; which is as much the Servant's due, as any Thing the Master has is his own ; he has already paid for it, and to defraud him of it, is to rob him of just as much. It is indeed in the Master's keeping, but it is no more *his*, than any Stranger's : The Master sold it for so much Time and Labour, as the Servant and he agreed for, which being paid for by the Servant's Work, it is then his own. A Master may as well agree for Goods with any Customer, and receive the Price of them beforehand, and after that detain the Goods also, as take his Servant's Time and Labour first, and then deny him his appointed Wages. There is nothing plainer, and better understood, than the Reasonableness and Justice of standing to Agreements, such especially as were deliberately made, and which have been performed without Fraud on the one Part ; and yet there is Reason to think this Part of Justice is very ill practised by many Masters to their Servants, as if they did not owe the same to *them*, as to their Betters. Some such idle Fancy must possess them, that Superiours are not equally obliged by contracting with Inferiours, as they are with Equals ; for otherwise they would be as just to Servants, as to any one else. That which may make one easily conjecture thus, is, that the higher we go, the better Quality and Fashion People are of, the more they are observed to offend against this Part of Justice, the less Regard they have to the Discharge of what is due by Contract to their Servants. So that that, which should be both to their Honour and Advantage (the serving great People) turns to their greater Loss and Mischiefe ; they are thereby



thereby only more injured and oppressed: For this additional Guilt the Honour and great Quality of Masters add to *Injustice*, that they make it also Oppression. It is *Injustice* to deny what is the Servant's due; but when the Servants cannot, by the legal common Courses, obtain that due, through the great Power and Titles of their Masters, then are they also *oppressed* as well as *wronged*. It were some Shame to say, that either Law, or Custom should encourage, or should justify Oppression; for Justice is to fit the Highest in the World.

It might contribute to the doing this Sort of Justice, to consider, that they who are backwardest to do it, are commonly the Worst served; they are often met with, though in a very faulty Manner: For whilst the Servants live *with* them, they commonly live *upon* them; *i. e.* they find out ways to pay themselves with Interest; but it is by Frauds and Villanies, by allowing great Rates to such as deal with them, by being Ill-husbands for them, by going Shares with those that gain from them, and by a World of little Courses that are false and wicked: One Injustice begets another: And though an unjust Master will not *excuse* a false and wicked Servant, yet he oft *Occasions* it, by shewing him the Way, and putting him upon some kind of Necessity of living by such Shifts: And therefore the surest Way of being well served, is to be very just, to stand exactly to Agreements, and to give them their own; that makes them diligent and faithful, and gives them no Temptation to be otherwise: Whereas, when that which of Right belongs to them is denied them, they *first* imagine they may do themselves Justice, and *then*, by Degrees, they give themselves great Reparations. Thus, by being ill used, they become wicked. Against this Injustice, God, in the Scriptures, gives Men frequent warning. Thus in *Lev. xix. 13.* and *Deut. xxiv. 14.* *Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant, that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, or of thy Strangers that are in thy Land within thy Gates. At his Day thou shalt give him his Hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his Heart upon it, lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be Sin unto thee.* The Hardship is indeed the greater, in detaining the Wages of poor Men who daily subsist by their Labours; but the Injustice is the same, whether you bargain by the Day or Year, in detaining their Hire from them. So in *Jer. xxii. 13.* *Woe unto him that buildeth his House by Unrighteousness, and his Chambers by Wrong; that useth his Neighbour's Service without Wages, and giveth him not for his Work.* Undoubtedly, this Woe belongs to all that defraud their Servants of their Wages, for they are *Neighbours* in the Scripture Sense of that Word; and they receive the Profit and Advantage of their Work and Service, and therefore ought to pay them for the same. So saith St. James, *v. 4.* *Behold, the Hire of the Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth; and their Cries have entred into the Ears of the Lord of Sabbath.* The keeping back the Hire of *other*, and *all* Labourers, as well as Reapers, will cry unto God, and enter into his Ears; the Cruelty and Injustice is all alike, and the Offence the same: And therefore they, who make Conscience of paying the *Day-labourers*, should also know they are obliged to deal as justly by their *Menial-servants*, who also labour for them Day by Day. It is the same Case with Food and Rayment, with any Profit or Convenience that the Servant has contracted for; it is in Justice due to him, and must not be with-holden from him. When he has earned it, it is *his*, and his Inability of recovering it, by Might, or Law, makes it not less his due, than if he were actually possessed of it. And the Injustice of detaining from Inferiours, weak and helpless, is raised and aggravated by that Consideration, because there is Insolence and Unmercifulness joyned with it. When they have nothing to oppose or answer to the Right and Justice of the Servants and Inferiours Claim, they have recourse to Power and Might; they are richer, greater, and have more



more Friends and Interest, and by their help they trample over Justice : Nothing can betray a worse Mind than this, to oppress the Weak and Helpless, either because they are ignorant of the Means of recovering their Dues, or unable to go through the Trouble, or bear the Charge of doing it : This is to take the Advantage of Mens Weakness, which ought much rather to provoke their Pity and Compassion, and make them Friends and Patrons.

These, and whatever else Particulars are due to Servants by Contract and Agreement, may well be thought meant and intended by St. Paul, when he commands the Masters to give to their Servants that which is *Just*.

The other Part of what he commands, is to give them that which is *Equal*, i. e. to deal fairly, honestly, and kindly with them, to give them that which is their due in Reason and Conscience, although they have not formally contracted for it : And this may include all the Particulars abovementioned, which were due in Justice, and recoverable by the Force of Law ; for a Man may be as unjust in detaining that which the Law would not compel him to deliver, as that which it would force from him, and give to the true Owner. It is the Reason and Benefit of the Contract, that makes it at first binding, and obliges the Conscience to make it good, before the Penalty of Laws come to be considered : If one Man borrows Money of another, he knows he is obliged in Conscience to repay him, although he is not under formal Bonds to do it ; the Benefit he receives he knows is naturally conditional, and requires the being answered in the like kind, which he on his Part promises, and the other expects : The Bond, that afterwards succeeds, is to constrain him to do that Justice, which his own Conscience told him he must do, without Constraint. It is therefore evident, that where the Reason and Benefit of a Contract appear, there the Conscience is equally obliged to stand to it, and make it good as if it were never so formally made in Words, and tied by Penalties : For tho' all Contracts naturally suppose mutual Promises and Engagements, yet the Bottom and Foundation of those Promises is the Sense of some Benefit received, or the Hope and Presumption of some *to be* received ; and therefore that is the Obligation at the Bottom. And therefore, there is a *presumed* Contract, wherever the beneficial Effects of one appear, although there be no formal one actually made. If therefore a Master receive the Advantage of his Servant's Time and Labour, he is obliged in Conscience to make him a sufficient Recompence, although there were no Bargain formally made between them : This the Conscience says is *equal*, because the Reason and Benefits of a Contract visibly appear. This Rule is not only applicable to *Masters* with regard to their Servants, but indeed to all Mankind with respect to one another. The Mind may be in Chains and Fetters, where the Body is, and must be free ; the Conscience often is obliged, where the Forms of Justice can take no hold on him, so that there are more Prisoners than we see or think of : Many that walk at Liberty, and seem to be as free as the Air they breath in, that yet know within themselves, that they are truly Prisoners, and due to Justice, though they elude it by some Slight or Falshood. They know they are obliged in Reason and Justice, and good Conscience, to discharge a great many Debts, which yet no Evidence, no Judge or Jury can extort from them : Their Credit, may be, was so great, that they gave no Bond : Their reputed Honesty was such, that Men were glad to deal with them upon their own Terms : Or else they mortgaged doubly, gave false Security, or so contrived their Obligations, that they should be insignificant when tried. The Justice of the Laws pursues with Hatred and Abhorrence all these wicked Proceedings ; but the Subtilty of wicked and designing People is too much for them ; they triumph in her Weakness and their own Skill, and in contempt of her, walk at great Liberty : But it is the Liberty of *Body* only ; for the *Mind* is all that while in Bonds, and knows its Obligations, knows what is truly  
just



just and equal, with respect to Reason and Conscience, however it escapes the Cognizance or Penalties of Laws.

But by *Equal* is also to be understood such Usage and Treatment as is fair, good-natured, and humane ; to make their Lives as easy as we can, consistently with the Performance of their Duty, and our Business ; and therefore not to pursue them with perpetual Contumely and Reproach, nor use them as we do our Beasts of Burthen. It is one of the worst ways in the World of shewing our Superiority, by giving ill Language, and Words that become no body to receive. The Condition of Servitude is of itself grievous enough, without the additional Evil of being, on all Occasions, treated with Contempt and Scorn : And if the Truth were known, the Service is not the better performed for such perpetual Chidings and Upbraidings, especially in so unseemly a manner. The Nature of our Country is not so vile and disingenuous, as always to want such galling Spurs, and sharp Excitements to the Performance of the Servants Duties. Good Words at least should be the first Experiment that all Superiours should make, and be as long continued as they can, they are so handsome and becoming reasonable and religious People ; and to be sure those Servants that perform their Duty, do it better with good Words, and live more comfortably ; and without doubt those Means are fittest to be used, that best attain their End, with the Ease and Pleasure of both Parties.

To this Comfort of good Words, must also be added *good Usage* ; Masters must not be over-rigorous in their Punishments, when Servants are faulty, but should inflict them with Deliberation, good Intention, and Compassion. Anger produces often sad Effects, even where it prompts the *Parents* to correct the *Children* ; and therefore must be carefully attended to, where that Affection is not present to restrain them from exceeding the Bounds of Moderation : This is also to give them what is *Equal*. The Masters owe their Servants Admonition and Reproof, when they are found faulty, and Punishments proportioned to their Guilt. To this Moderation, Masters also are to have Regard in their Commands and Impositions ; they must not oppress them with immoderate Tasks and Labour, but are to have a merciful Respect to the Capacity, Ability and Strength of Servants. It was one Occasion of the Institution of the Sabbath to the *Jews*, that Servants might be relieved, and not consume a miserable Life in constant and continued Labours.

It is true, that the Servant's Time and Labour are the Master's, and he is to give them to no one's Use besides : But yet they are to be exacted with Equity and Reason. Men must not wear out the Heart, nor make all waste they can of what is truly let out to them, although it be not expressly covenanted against ; because it is presumed in Reason and good Sense, that others are to succeed in the Possession of those Lands. A Servant is not so to be consumed with Toil, as to be made unfit for other, or for farther Service : He is not presumed to consent to such a Bargain, though all his Time and Labour still belongs to his Master. They are therefore very much to blame, that have no Consideration of their Servants, that never think they do enough, but are continually charging them with new Tasks, without any Rest or Intermision : This is not dealing *equally* with them.

But furthermore, under this Head may well be comprehended all other Care that is fit to be taken of them, both in their Health and Sicknes ; the giving them good Advice, and setting them a good Example, affording them Opportunities of serving God, both at home and abroad ; the Instructing them according to their Leisure and Abilities in the common Rules of Honesty and Justice, Truth and Faithfulness ; exciting them to Diligence and Industry, and encouraging them therein ; and, in a Word, to make them Virtuous and Religious, that they may be as useful in the World as they can ; and to see, in Case of Sicknes, that they want not what is



fitting their Condition : These are Courses that are likely to make good Servants, and to encourage such as are so, and to oblige them to serve their Masters with the greatest Care and Affection possible ; there being none of so low and abject a Spirit, but who will strive to make Amends for kind, good-natured Usage.

All these Particulars may well be understood to be enjoined by St. Paul, when he would have the Masters *give their Servants that which is just and equal.*

The Reason here assigned, why they should do so, is next to be considered ; and that is, *knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven.* To make which Words a binding Reason to Masters, they are to contain either a Promise of Encouragement to such as give to their Servants *that which is just and equal*, or Threatning to such as shall neglect the doing it. And considering who this Master is, the Lord Christ ; he that shall judge the Quick and Dead, with whom there is no respect of Persons, who is to punish and reward : Considering this, it is certain that the Words intend them both ; namely, an Encouragement to those that shall comply with the Command, and Threatning to such as shall neglect it. As they contain an Encouragement, they may be understood thus : *Masters, give to your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing, or remembering, that ye have also a Master in Heaven :* One from whom you expect the just Performance of all those great and precious Promises, which, of his Grace and Goodness, he at any Time hath made to you : And one from whom you look for all the Mercies, and Benefits, both Temporal and Spiritual, that are either fit for him to give, or for you to receive : And one who hath promised to be a bounteous *Master* to all his faithful and obedient *Servants*, to shew Mercy to such as shew Mercy to others : He took upon himself the Form of a Servant, and lived a mean precarious Life, depending, for ought that appears, upon the Charity and Friendship of good People for his Subsistence, and on the Entertainments his Doctrine gained him ; and therefore hath exempted that, and every other poor and mean Condition, from Contumely and Reproach among Christians, and made them rather, for his sake, Objects of great Pity and Compassion. *Behold*, saith our Saviour, *I am among you, as he that serveth*, not only to give his Disciples an Example of Humility and Condescending, now and then, on just Occasions, below their outward State and Quality, when it is to be serviceable to one another ; but to sanctify all Conditions of Life, and to shew the World, that God looks not with Man's Eyes, that he has no respect to Persons, that he regards not Birth and Fortune, Quality and Title ; but that the meanest People in the World are acceptable with him, if they obey his Laws, and do his Will : That it is Goodness, Virtue and Religion, that recommend Men to his Favour, and nothing else, of which the Poor and Servants of this World are full as capable, as the Rich and Mighty, and most honourable Masters. And as he hath made them Partakers of the same Grace here, and capable of the same Glory hereafter, so he commands them to be treated here with all the Mercy and Humanity that their Condition is capable of receiving ; upon this Principle, no doubt, that all the World should be as happy as they can : And this is that, that every single Person in the World should govern himself by, to make each single Creature in the World as easy and as happy as he can, in the Condition he is in ; not to molest, afflict, or injure any one ; but to do all Justice, and to shew all Mercy we are able, consistent with our own Benefit, and that of those to whom we are more immediately related. Our *Master, that is in Heaven*, hath, by his Laws, consulted better the Ease and Benefit of all Inferiour Relations of Men, than either *Jewish, Greek* or *Roman* Lawgivers have ever done ; their Condition is much more happy under Christianity, than any other Dispensation. The State of Subjects under their Princes, the Subjection of Wives to their Husbands, of Children to their Parents, of  

Servants



Servants to their Masters, is abundantly more easy by the Rules and Principles of that Religion, than to any People else, *i. e.* Christianity hath provided better for their Ease and Comfort, if those that are concerned will follow its Directions. Christianity does not barely leave these Things to the Civil Laws and Customs of the Country, but it gives new Orders in their Favour; where Laws and Customs are unrighteous, cruel, and unreasonable against them, it mitigates them, and commands its Profelytes to change them for good-natured, just, and reasonable one's: In a Word, Christianity is the best Religion that ever was, for the Good of Mankind; it best secures the Rights and Honours, Privileges and Advantages of all Superiours, and best consults the Ease and Happiness of all Inferiours, by the most strict and indispensable Obligations it lays on all Men, to be exceeding just and merciful, and to discharge their several Duties to each other with the utmost Care and Faithfulness that can be. And this it does, beyond all other Dispensations, by Promises of Grace and Favour here, and mighty Recompences in the World to come, of which our Lord and Master is to be the Judge and sole Dispenser.

This End it also aims at, and pursues, by the Threatnings of the greatest Punishment to such as shall neglect their several Duties; for that is also implied in the Words of the Text, *Knowing that ye also have a Master that is in Heaven.* Do what becomes you to your Servants; give them that which is just and equal, remembering that ye also have a Master in Heaven, that Commands you so to do, and who will also, one Day, take Account how ye have done it. With this your Master there is no respect of Persons; the Bond and Free are all alike to him; the meanest Servant is as dear to him, as the most honourable Master: All shall be judged alike, and most impartially: The false and disobedient Servants shall be punished, and so shall all unjust and cruel Masters.

Now what can shew the Excellence and Usefulness of the Christian Religion better, than the Care it takes to secure the Happiness of all the World, by securing the Duties of all Relations, Natural and Civil, by such Rewards and Punishments? Be but a just and good Prince, and you shall be beloved and feared by all your Subjects; be an obedient Subject, and you shall live secure; if not, expect the Rods and Axes. Be a good Father, and you shall have obedient Children, and receive great Comfort from them: Be a good Son, and you shall be beloved by your Parents, and all that know you: Be disobedient and rebellious, and you shall be rejected, disinherited, imprisoned, and, it may be, punished farther. Be a good Husband, and you shall live easily, and be beloved and honoured by your Wife; be an unkind or false one, and you shall be hated and ill spoken of. Be a good Wife, and you shall be beloved and praised; be a bad one, you shall be ill used, or else divorced. Be a good Master, and you shall be well served; be an unjust and cruel one, and all shall hate you, and fly from you. Be a good Servant, and you shall be well used; be a bad and faithless one, and expect the Mill, the Mines, or a Halter. These are the Hopes, and these the Fears, that other Laws and Dispensations hold out; these are the Promises, and these the Threats that are to bind Men to their several Duties, and to deter them from neglecting them: But what Security is this, to what the Christian Doctrine offers; when to the faithful, just, and true Discharge of all Mens Duties, it offers all the natural Advantages of doing well, and everlasting Life in Happiness besides? And to the wilfull Contempt and Neglect of all these several Duties, to all the natural Inconveniencies and Mischiefs of doing ill, it threatens endless and amazing Punishments? What strange Encouragements to good Morality are these? What strange Discouragements to bad? Allow it but (as well you may) that the true and honest Discharge of every Man's Duty to each other, in the Relation they stand in, is the surest Way of making  
and



and keeping all Men easy and happy throughout the World, and you will see that nothing ever so consulted the Good of all Mankind, even in this Life, as the Christian Religion. For had the Legislators, and the Moralists of all Countries and all Ages, delivered the same Lessons with those of Christ; yet, not being able to bring to light this Immortality of Life in Pleasure, or in Pain, they must have talked but finely to little purpose; and all their Laws have wanted the most powerful Sanction. This also shews how great a Part (almost indeed the Whole) of true Religion, good Morality makes up, to which the Rewards discovered by especial Revelation are affixt, and to the Neglect of which the Punishments revealed are all threatned. Let no one, therefore, think it so indifferent a Thing, whether they well or ill discharge the Duties of their several Relations; for if Religion were divided into Parts, the Duties that we owe to one another, would make up five of six; and Heaven and Hell, we see, are to reward their good Performance, and punish the Neglect of them. And let a Man take Care to have a due Regard to Justice, if a Magistrate, and live in obedience to the Laws as a good Subject, approve himself a dutiful Son to his Parents, and a good Parent to his Children; a faithful and good-natured careful Husband to his Wife; a just and equal Master to his Servants, and a good, diligent and honest Servant to his Master; let him discharge with Care and a good Conscience the Duties of his different Relations, and see how much he will want of being a good Christian: If these were well performed, the rest of our Religion would go down with ease; the Scruples and Objections made to *Doctrines* would go near to vanish, if our disorderly Affections and our Will were once subdued to Reason, and we were truly just and honest Men; and, to speak in fashion, *Men of great Probity, and good Morals*: For that indeed is the very Life and Substance of Christ's Religion; and in the Sense and full Perswasion of this, I have been so long insisting on the several Duties that we owe to one another, and with which I have now done.



T H R E E  
S E R M O N S  
O N  
SELF-MURTHUR.

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S E R M O N I.

II SAMUEL XVII. VERSE 23.

*And when Abithophel saw that his Counsel was not followed, he saddled his Ass, and arose, and gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father.*

**T**H E S E Words contain a plain Account of what happened to a most unfortunate and wicked Man ; and to make them as useful as I can, I think it will be best to treat of them in this Order. *First*, To speak to the disastrous End *Abithophel* came to, *he hanged himself, and died.* *Secondly*, To the Occasion of it, *he saw that his Counsel was not followed.* *Thirdly*, Something previous to his Execution, *he arose, gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order :* And *Fourthly*, to what followed, *he was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father.*

*First*, The disastrous End that *Abithophel* came to, was, that *he hanged himself.* This was a Death of Infamy, and allotted by the Laws to great Malefactors : And therefore it is said, *Deut. xxi. 23. He that is hanged, is accursed of God ;* not for dying, but for deserving to die in that manner. It was his Crime, not Punishment, and made him *accursed of God* : His being hanged on a Tree, was to denote some great Offence that deserved that Punishment, and for which he had incurred the Divine Displeasure. And so, when our Saviour is said to be made a Curse for us, by dying on the Cross (which *St. Peter*, in *Acts x. 39.* calls *hanging on a Tree*) it is with respect to this Sentence of the Law in *Deut.* He bare our Sins, and was put to the like Death, and underwent the like Ignominy with those Offenders, who, under the Law, were *accursed of God.* This Death *Abithophel* underwent, not by any Sentence of Law, but by his Choice, upon some private Consideration ; and tho' he avoided the Ignominy of such a Sentence, yet the Ignominy of the



*Death* was not to be avoided ; because it was accounted an ignominious and accursed Death, and was appointed for notorious Malefactors. But the Use we may make of his choosing this particular, rather than any other Way of dying, is very little, unless we may observe, how far the wisest Men are blinded by their Passions, when, to avoid some Shame, they run into Courses that directly lead to it. The Thing to be principally considered, is, not why he died in *this* Manner, but why he died at all ; what Right he had to put an end to his Life, by hanging himself : For, to do this, without blame, a Man must be at perfect Liberty both by the Laws of God and Man, and independent on them both : There must be no Obligation on him, either from the Law of Nature and right Reason, or from the revealed Law of God, or from his lawful Superiours upon Earth : For if any of these withhold his Hands, he cannot innocently lay them on himself. Now, as to the Law of Nature condemning this Practice, I do not so much appeal to that innate Love of Life, and Fear of Death, which is generally implanted in all Men's Hearts (for these Men, being freed from these Affections, will deny their Power) as to that general Abhorrence that all Nations of the World have had that Practice in : And the more Wise, more Civil and Polite those Nations have been esteemed, the more they have condemned it ; which if it be not a Proof of the Reasonableness of any Doctrine, we shall never find what is. And though there be a great many Examples, both of *Greeks* and *Romans*, even in their best Times, that fell by their own Hands, upon some pressing Extremities ; yet their *Rules*, their *Laws*, and their *Reasonings*, were all against it. And those Examples against their Rules, are of no more Authority to countenance such a Practice, than the Example of Men committing any other Wickedness, will countenance such other Wickedness, against their Reason, and against express Command of God. Their Rules, and their Laws were against Adultery, and Rapes, and Violence, Oppression, Exaction and all Injustice ; and yet their great ones were guilty of them all, when they found their Opportunities : And their Historians often mention them without Reproach or Blame ; and some were still found, that would call their impure Liberties, *Gallantries*, and fine Freedoms ; and their Oppressions, *Conquests* ; and their unjust Invasions of Kingdoms, *glorious Ambition*, and Enlargement of Empire. But a Man would be much mistaken, if he thought that this was the Judgment of their wise and sober Writers, or of the grave and serious Part that governed them ; or that such Practices were countenanced by their Laws, and Rules of living. This I mention, to obviate that Objection, that many Passages are found in the Writings of these People, in Commendation of such, as, to avoid some great Calamity, have put an End to their Lives by their own Hands ; for that will always happen, that Men of loose Principles should have false Notions of Liberty, and Honour, and great Courage, and should accordingly commend such Practice as is conformable to such loose Principles. And we, who live in an Age, where every Thing is justified by some poor Writer or another, though never so extravagant, impious, and unreasonable, should not be hard to believe, that so it has been heretofore with other People, and so will be hereafter : And yet we should be loth to have Posterity believe, that this was the Sense, the Reason, the Understanding, and the Judgment of our Age, in the general. We must consult the wise, the sober, and the serious Writers of the Times, the Laws, the Rules, and Reasonings of the grave and governing Part of a Nation, to understand their true Sense of Matters of Moment : And from them we shall learn, that *Self-Murther* was evermore an abhorred Practice among them ; that whatever pretence it made to great Honour, Magnanimity and Courage, it was indeed but an Effect of Cowardise and Fear, and a Mark of a poor impatient Spirit, that sunk under the common Calamities of Life, and knew not how to bear Misfortunes ;



that it was Disobedience and Impiety, to desert the Station that their Supreme Commander gave them to maintain, and act apparently against their Sovereign's Order. I trouble you not with the Particulars, because there is no need: 'Tis certain, the considering, virtuous, and religious Part of Mankind have all along been of this Opinion, and condemned the Practice of those, who, to free themselves from some Misfortunes, have ended their Days, before their Time, by Violence; and it would be no great Wonder, if more Examples, and more Defenders of this Practice were found among the *Gentiles*, than there are; because they were, many of them, *Atheists*, or Believers in so many Gods, that it almost came to the same Thing: And to them, who acknowledge no Supreme Power who governs the World, and to whom Men are accountable for what they do, it is a vain Thing to talk of the Laws of Nature, and right Reason; for let them be never so plain and clear, they will go for nothing, where they may be transgressed without Fear of being vindicated by any Power, or Punishment. And doubtless, if a Man believes he has no Body hereafter to account to, he will fear no Master or Superiour here, from whom he knows he can escape so easily, by Death. But we are now supposing the Belief of God, and upon that Bottom affirm, that a Man cannot be so much Master of his Life, as to throw it away at pleasure, without regard to that Will of his, which appears to be written in our Hearts, forbidding such a Practice; of which, the concurring Consent of the wisest Lawgivers, and Writers of the wisest and most civilized People, of all Ages, is, I think one very good Proof.

As to any Declaration of the Will of God, in this Particular, in the written Revelation; it is not to be expected there should be a single Prohibition of every single Sin, that a Man can commit; it is sufficient, if there be general Prohibitions that include them all. And such is, in this Case, that general one, of, *Thou shalt do no Murder*; which secures the Life of every Man and Woman in the World, whose Life is not obnoxious, by some other Command, to be taken away: As, the Laws, for Instance, punish *Theft*, and other Crimes with Death, notwithstanding the *sixth Commandment*; because Men commit other Offences, to which Death is due by other Laws of equal Force with the Law against Murder. But it is Murder still, to take away any one's Life, and an Offence against the sixth Commandment, if that Life be not forfeited by some other Law of equal Force and Obligation with this against Murder.

But these Commands do all respect our *Neighbour* only; and they, who murder themselves, know and confess they are tied by the sixth Commandment, not to murder any one else. To this it may be answered, that this is downright to beg the Question in hand; for if the Letter and the Sense of the Command will reach a Man's self, as well as his Neighbour, why should not the Commandment include our selves? A Man is murdered, when he murders himself, and the Command prohibits Murder: And though the Commandments of the *second Table* do especially refer to our Neighbour, yet not exclusively of our selves: We may not bear false Witness against ourselves, no more than against our Neighbour; because the Truth is hurt thereby, and some Wrong done by such a Testimony; so that where it is possible for the Commandments to take in our own Case, there they will do so, as well as our Neighbour's. But to make the Matter plain, let it be taken for supposed, that both the Sixth and the rest of the Commandments of the second Table respect our Neighbour only; and we may ask, whether by *Neighbour*, is not to be understood any one that is truly injured by our Offence, as well as the Party most immediately concerned? The seventh Commandment, for Example, is, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*. When a wicked Man falls into this Commission, and abuses his Neighbour's Bed, does he only offend against the  
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Partner of his Sin, the adulterous Woman, or also against the injured Husband? Does he not also offend against his own Wife, if he have one? Does he not offend against the Parents and Relations also of his wicked Accomplice, dishonouring their Name, and House; and filling the Family with Grief, and Shame, and much Confusion? When a Man *steals*, against the *Eighth Commandment*, does he only offend against the Party whom he immediately wrongs, or also against those who suffer by that Wrong? When one bears false Testimony, against the *Ninth Commandment*, and thereby defeats a Man's Title to his Estate, his Office, or Employ, does he not offend against the Wife and Children of that Man, who lived by that Estate, or Office, or Employ, as well as against the Man and Master of that Family? You see then that the Commandment respects more than *one* Party, under the Notion of *Neighbour*, even *all* that are injured by that Transgression. Now I ask, whether this does not happen also, in breaking the Sixth Commandment, by murdering one's Neighbour? Are not the Wife and Children, and the Family, made very miserable by such a Death? And I ask again, whether the same Mischief does not follow to one's *own* Family, by a Self-Murder, as to another Family, by the Murder of another? And if it do, it is certain that the Sixth Commandment forbids Self-Murder, as sure as it does the Murder of another; because it forbids the *Consequences* of Self-Murder (which are Shame, and Grief, and Loss, and Pain, and Injury, and all sorts of Mischiefs) as certainly as it forbids the Consequences of murdering any one besides; because a Man is no more at Liberty to injure and afflict his own House and Relations, than the House and Relations of a Stranger. If therefore he offend against his *Neighbour*, even all that are injured by his Offence, as well as the single Party injured more immediately; it is manifest he also offends against his *Neighbour*, even all his own House, Relations, and Dependants, by taking away his own Life; since (as I said) the Consequences are the same, and full as calamitous, to my own Family, by such a Stroke, as they would be to another Family, if I should, by a Murder, deprive it of a like Relation. If therefore a Man were at full Liberty, as to any express Command of God, to do that Violence to himself; yet he would be obliged to with-hold his Hand, by many other Commands of God, which forbid the doing so much Mischief to other People, as such a Violence does always do. There is therefore nothing gained to this Cause, by alledging the Sixth Commandment does not forbid Self-Murder, as relating to our Neighbour only, *i. e.* to other People; because it is manifest, our Neighbours, other People, are exceedingly mischieved by the Breach of it in Self-Murder. The Mistake in all these Cases seems to be this, at the Bottom, the thinking the Commands of the *second Table* refer to *one* Neighbour only, namely, the Party concerned immediately in the Injury, whereas they do undoubtedly refer to all Neighbours that are, by a natural and easy Consequence, concerned and injured: As the Wife in the Husband, the Husband in the Wife, the Parents in the Children, and the Children in the Parents; and so in all Relations, more or less. And therefore if the Commands of God, prohibiting Adultery, Theft, and False-witness, are understood to prohibit not only the single *Acts*, but also the mischievous and wicked *Consequences* of those Acts, which are natural and unavoidable; it is plain the *sixth* Commandment does the like, and therefore forbids Self-Murder, unless it can be separated from all those mischievous and wicked Consequences that unavoidably follow that Practice.

And, that these *Consequences* are equally intended by God the Lawgiver, and are to be as much regarded by Men, as the prime Mischief and *Occasion* of them, may appear farther from hence, (as well as the Guilt of Self-Murder) that though a Man were never so weary of his Life, and sought as willingly for Death, as People  
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in Pain for Ease, and wearied Labourers for Rest and Sleep ; yet were it utterly unlawful to give that Man the Satisfaction he desired, by killing him ; not only because it would be murdering of that single Man (notwithstanding his desire of dying) but because of the Mischiefs following to the Family, by such Death. *First*, It would be Murder to kill a Man, though he were very desirous of dying, and requested it, as a Kindness, at your Hands : Murder therefore does not barely consist in Violence that is offered to one, *against his Will* ; but, in taking away a Life which you have no Right to take away, by the Laws of God or Man. But why have you no Right to do that which he desires of you, since Wrong is done to no one who is willing, and he conveys his Right to you, by his desiring you to kill him ? The Reason is, he has no Right himself, and therefore can convey none to another. If he were Master of his own Life, so as to lay it down at pleasure, by God's Law, I do not see but he might make *you* Master of it, if he pleased, and by full Consent. Whatever he can lawfully do to himself, he can, if he will, empower you to do to him ; and whatever he cannot empower you to do to him, he cannot do himself. Now he cannot empower you to kill him ; and the Reason is, he has not Power (I mean by God's Law) to kill himself : For if he had Power by God's Law to kill himself, he would not offend against God's Law, by commissioning *you* to do so : Taking it therefore for granted, that to kill a Man, though willing and desirous to be killed, would yet be Murder before God, it will follow ; *First*, That a Man has really no such Consent to give, his Life is not in his own Power to throw away ( for if it might be *given*, it might be *taken*.) *Secondly*, That Mischiefs may be done to one that is willing and consenting to it ; and therefore, that Self-Murder is not the less mischievous and injurious, because a Man consents to it. And, *Thirdly*, that Murder (as well as other Crimes) has especial respect to the Injuries and Mischiefs that other People suffer, as well as to those inflicted immediately on the Party concerned. For if Murder be a Crime, because it deprives a Man of what is so valuable as Life (although not valued by this Man, who willingly parts with it) it is also a Crime, because it deprives *other* People of the Assistance, Help, and Comfort which that Life either did, or might afford them. And that which another Man's Life is to *his* Relations, Kindred and Dependants, that is *your* Life to *your* Relations, Kindred and Dependants ; and therefore no more to be cast away by *you*, than *his* is to be taken away by any other Man.

I have repeated these Things, that you might see the plainer, how a Man's Life is not his own to do as he pleases with it ; but, that could he be supposed to be at Liberty, with respect to his single self, to throw it away at pleasure ; yet that his Duty and Obligation to his *Relations* (not now to say the *Publick*) would constrain him not to do it : And this by the Law of God, even by the Sixth Commandment, which forbidding the Injuries and Mischiefs consequential upon Murder, as well as the Murder itself, must also be understood to include the mischievous Consequences of Self-Murder, as well as any else. And if the Consequences are prohibited, the Cause and Occasion of them also is prohibited.

I alledge, in the next Place, that both the *Jews* and *Christians*, few or none excepted, have all along condemned this Practice, and thought it was condemned by the Sixth Commandment in general, as well as by other Passages in Scripture, by natural and unstrained Consequence. Although, to do them right, they never failed to affirm, that to do violence to one's own Life, was to act against Reason and Natural Religion, withdrawing our Obedience from our Supreme Commander, withstanding his Will, distrusting his Care and Providence, and betraying an impotent and effeminate Mind ; shrinking from beneath the common Accidents of Life, and able to bear nothing uneasy ; together with those other Arguments which are



every where to be met withal, and which, therefore, I meddle not with at present; being content you should only observe, that this Practice hath been all along condemned by People of all Religions, and pursued with great Abhorrence, and all manner of Discouragements, and by the Christian Religion especially with dreadful Sentences: And therefore, let every one consider seriously what Obligations the Consent, that is so general, and so reasonable, must lay upon them. To think it is not forbidden by God to destroy the Work of his Hands, because Self-Murder is not named expressly, is to leave yourself at Liberty to commit a Hundred other hateful Crimes, that are not specified in particular, but are concluded under general Heads. When God says to *Noah* in *Gen. ix. 6. Whoso sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed, for in the Image of God made he Man*; It is plain, that whatever the Meaning of the last Words are, in whatever Sense Man is said to be *made in the Image of God*; the Reason of the Prohibition holds as strong and good against *Self-Murder*, as against the Killing any other Man. For, if I must not shed the Blood of *another* Man, because he is *made in the Image of God*; I must not shed the Blood of *my own self*, because I also am a Man, and made alike also *in the Image of God*, as he is. That Reason, I say, (whatever it is) restrains *Self-Murder* just as much as it does the Murder of any other Man. But I will also add (and which I would you should remember) a Reason, why Self-Murder is not, any where, *expressly* prohibited by its Name; and that is, that whatever Sins and Offences God, as a Law-giver, prohibits, he prohibits with a Penalty; he affixes such a Punishment to such a Crime, and he who commits that Crime, is to undergo the determined Punishment in this World, whether it be Restitution, loss of Limb, or of Life it self. Now this can never happen in the Case of Self-Murder, which prevents all Punishment, and therefore prevents all *Threatnings*, and all Laws. When I say, that God prohibits no Offence, without affixing a Punishment to its Transgression; I do not mean, that he always did it *himself*, but that it was always done by his Appointment, Order and Decree; though for the most part the Punishment is named by him himself. But neither God, nor Magistrate, can prohibit Self-Murder with any Penalty that can affect the Criminal himself; because, by his very Crime, he escapes all temporal Punishment in Person; he is dead before you can take any Cognizance of his Offence. You see then, what Reason there is, why Self-Murder was not expressly prohibited by Name, by God, or *Moses* by Command of God. No Law can be enacted, to any purpose, without a Penalty; where therefore there can be no Penalty, there can be no Law: Now Self-Murder prevents all Penalty, and therefore wants no particular Prohibition: It must therefore be included under general Commands, and forbidden only as a *Sin*, of which God only can take Cognizance, and that in another World. This Satisfaction was owing to that common Objection, that Self-Murder was no where expressly forbidden by God by Name, tho' abundance of Matters of much less Moment were in the Holy Scriptures. But I must say, upon this Occasion, that *Scripture Silence* is true Silence, and says nothing either *for*, or *against* any Practice: And that when, in this Relation of *Abithophel*, as also that of *Judas's* sad End, there is neither Blame, nor Commendation bestowed on what was done by either; we must judge by some other Rule, whether they did well or amiss, and not by the Relation; which neither blames by not commending, nor commends by not blaming what is related. It is most certain that Self-Murder is forbidden by God in general, and by consequence in many Places of the Holy Scriptures: And is really utterly irreconcilable with that Patience under Afflictions, that Resignation and Submission to the Will of God, in all Conditions of Life, however sad and calamitous, that the Christian Religion certainly requires of its Professors. And to think it is no Sin to destroy one's self, is one of the fatallest



Mistakes a Man can fall into, and fruitful of all ill Consequences, and utterly condemns all the Wisdom, and all the Religion that ever was esteemed in the World. But I will, at present, only insist on your considering what has been said, concerning the Mischief and the Injury done, by these sudden Strokes, to our Neighbour, *i. e.* to other People. There is sometimes a great Loss to the Publick, by throwing away a valuable and useful Life: Always Scandal and Offence taken by good, but weak People; and some are misled by such Examples. But who can express the Pain and Grief, the Shame and the Confusion of all the innocent Relations that survive? Even natural and easy Deaths create a World of Sorrows, and make a deal of human Life (short as it is) tedious, and full of Trouble: Sudden and accidental Deaths affect us yet deeper; and if they have any thing remarkably calamitous and sad in them, it is worse still. But when it is violent and deliberate, then are they perfectly oppressed and overwhelmed. Is this the Care Men are to take of those who love them best, and who are, often, best beloved by them? Does this look any thing like Piety to Parents, or Kindness to Wife and Children? Yet this is the Return that these unnatural Children make to Fathers and to Mothers, if alive; this is the Dowry that these Husbands leave their Wives; and this the Patrimony Fathers convey to their Descendants. It is true indeed, these miserable People *intend* not these Misfortunes and Afflictions to their Friends and Kindred; they have it not in their Hearts to entail such Misery upon those to whom they wish all Happiness: But so it is, they see, in other People's Cases; and so, they know, it must be in their own: And it is no Matter what they *purpose*, when what they *do* will have its natural Operation, and occasion all these Mischiefs. I think, if any Consideration that is purely human, could restrain these cruel Violences, it should, and would be this, of saving so much Pain and Sorrow, and Confusion, as they unavoidably occasion to the best and nearest Friends they have in the World, by parting in such manner from them. Is it so hard for *you* to bear a little Poverty, a little Shame, Reproach or Infamy, or even the Fear and Apprehension of these Things? So hard, that you will rather die than venture them, or than endure them? And yet you will entail them on your Kindred and your Family, who have done nothing to deserve them: You will leave them to the Reproaches and Revilings, and the ill Usage of a pitiless, insulting, and uncharitable World; who will be sure to load them with the Infamy, and the Dishonours that you leave them. But, above all, with what perplexing Doubts and Fears, with what amazing and distracting Thoughts, do you fill their Minds, concerning your Condition in the other World? That Concern, indeed, touches even Strangers; all that hear of such sad Accidents: But that is an easy transient Trouble, in Comparison with that which Kindred and Relations feel on such Occasions, whose Grief is equal to their Love, and lasting as is their Life.

Sometimes it happens, that the Consideration of doing Mischief or Dishonour to those they love, and to whom they owe all Duty, will restrain People from doing what they incline strongly to do; and from doing which, the Consideration of their *own* Honour, Interest, and Duty will not restrain them. And therefore, it were well if these unhappy People, when they forget God and themselves, would yet permit the Sense of the Duty they owe their Neighbour, even their best Friends, and nearest Relations, to dwell upon their Minds, and have its Work upon them; that they would be content to live, at least till they can die without doing Wrong or Mischief to *other People*. This is what the Consideration of *Ahab's* End led me to say, in Opposition to a Practice that prevails too much among us, of Peoples destroying themselves, as *he* did. When the Jayler (who had received so strict a Charge of securing *Paul* and *Silas*, and knew that he must answer Body for



for Body for his Prisoners) found the Prison-doors open, he drew out his Sword, and would have killed himself, if Paul had not cried out with a loud Voice, *Do thy self no harm, for we are all here*, Acts xvi. 27. But this Jayler was a poor Gentile, an ignorant and unlearned Roman, in all likelihood; and therefore it is no great Wonder, to see him forward to dispatch himself in such a Manner; who only had it in his Mind to avoid, perhaps, a lingring and tormenting Death, for letting his Prisoners scape, by one more quick and easy, by his own Hand; and knew, it may be, nothing of any other Life than what he was leaving: By such People one can hardly expect the Laws of Nature, or the Dictates of Reason, or the Opinions of wise Writers, should be considered; they live by Sense, and are governed by their Passions. But better Things might be expected of *Abithophel*; a Jew, a Man of better Education, a Man of Birth, the King's Counsellor, and accounted so wise, that whoever advised with *Abithophel*, it was, in those Days, as if he had enquired at the Oracle of God; and therefore so much feared by *David*, when he heard he was with *Abjalom*, that he prayed expressly to God, that he would defeat the Counsel of *Abithophel*, before he knew what it was; as knowing it would be shrewdly mischievous, if followed. That one thus qualified should dare to die in such a Manner, is still more strange and unaccountable; yet even *Abithophel's* Self-Murder was not near so wicked and audacious, as such an Attempt must needs be in an understanding educated Christian; to whom the Will and Commands of God are revealed with equal Certainty, but with much greater (at the least much plainer) Arguments and Motives, both to deter from all Offence, and to encourage to Obedience. A Christian, that believes in God, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Life of the World to come, so much, that he could not be a Christian without such Belief; nor indeed a wise Man in being a Christian; one that believes, that the Wrath of God is now revealed against all Unrighteousness; that without Repentance no Man's Sins can be forgiven; that after Death there is no Repentance; but that as the Tree falls, so it will lie: That such a Man as this, professing the Faith of Christ crucified, and covenanting with God, in Baptism, to take up the Cross, and bear it, if need be, to Death, should, in the Impatience of his Soul, and pressed by some Calamity a little more than ordinary, deliberately choose to throw this Burthen off, by committing what he knows a Sin, of which he knows he never can Repent, and venture the most dreadful Consequence of that to everlasting Ages, is what no Body could ever Reason themselves into the Belief of, if the frequent Practice of some most unhappy People did not convince us, it might be done by letting us see it was: But it is, in truth, a great Reproach to Reason and Christ's Religion, that so it is; and not a little Dishonour is also cast upon our Nation hereby, as furnishing more Examples of this sort of Violence than any other, though much larger: Though that Reproach may help a little to save the Honour of Religion, as casting this bad Practice, somewhat, on our Climate, Diet, Liberty, Complexion, and Way of living. But I would make no manner of Excuse for it; it is a Practice to be abhorred and condemned with all our Zeal, to be pursued with all Pity; and to be guarded against with all our Care and Prudence, all our Reason and Religion, our walking in the Ways of God with all Stedfastness, and pouring out our constant Prayers for his preventing and assisting Grace, that his Fear may ever be before us, and that no Temptations to such Impiety may ever prevail upon us. Of the rest of the Particulars contained in the Text, in the Manner already laid out, you will read in the Discourses following.



## S E R M O N II.

II SAMUEL XVII. VERSE 23.

*And when Ahithophel saw that his Counsel was not followed, he saddled his Ass, and arose, and gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father.*

HAVING already taken Occasion from these Words, to consider the Case of Self-Murther, and shewn that *Ahithophel* had no Right to dispose of his own Life, in the Manner he did; nor any Man else to offer Violence to himself: But that all Men were restrained from such Attempts, by the general Law of God, contained in the sixth Commandment forbidding Murther; which being grounded on the Reason given by God in *Gen. ix. 6. that Man was made in the Image of God*, did as certainly take in *Self-Murther*, as the Murther of any other Man, every Man being himself made in the Image of God, as much as his Brother: And shewn moreover, that the Consequences of Murther, Adultery, Theft, and False-witness, being as certainly forbidden by God, as the prime Acts themselves, it would unavoidably follow, that the Consequences of Self-Murther were as certainly forbidden, as the Consequences of any other Murther: And therefore that the sixth Commandment, though especially relating to the Duty we owe our Neighbour (*i. e.* to one another) did as certainly prohibit Self-Murther, by prohibiting its Consequences, as any other Command prohibited the prime Act, by prohibiting the mischievous Effects that follow from it unavoidably; and answered, as the Time would let me, the common Objections that are raised, in Justification of these sorts of Violence: I am now, without farther Repetition, to proceed to the *Second Thing* I was to speak to, namely, the *Occasion of Ahithophel's Self-Murther*; which was, *that he saw that his Counsel was not followed*. The History of that matter is, in short, this: *Absalom*, by his popular Demeanour and artful Management, had estranged the Hearts of the *Jews* from the Love and Obedience they owed to *David* his Father; and there was so great a Defection, that it is, really, unaccountable, from what appears in the History: In this, *Ahithophel* was deeply concerned, and was accounted the very Life and Strength of the Conspiracy: And being called to give his Advice what *Absalom* had to do, he took Care, in the first Place, to make the Breach irreconcilable betwixt the Father and the Son. In this thing *Absalom* followed his Directions closely, as you may see, in *2 Sam. xvii. 20.* But advising farther, *Chap. xvii.* to pursue *David* closely, with a Body of Men that might certainly surprize him, he was, in this Point, opposed by *Hushai the Archite*, another very able Counsellor, and sent by *David*, on purpose, to go over to *Absalom's* Party, to defeat the Counsel of *Ahithophel*; and he did it effectually: For his Counsel was the more plausible (though not so good for the young Prince) and was accordingly followed, both *Absalom* and all the Men of *Israel* saying, *The Counsel of Hushai the Archite, is better than the Counsel of Ahithophel*. I leave you to read yourselves the different Counsels of these two Statesmen; it is only to my purpose to observe, that the Distaste *Ahithophel* took at his Advice's being rejected,



was the Occasion of his Ruine; *When he saw his Counsel was not followed, he arose, and went home to his House, set his Household in order, and hanged himself, and died.* There were two Things especially, that gave him this Discontent; the *First*, to see his Counsel not followed, but that of another Man preferred before his; a Disgrace that a great Statesman knows not how to bear, or put up: His Counsel was (you will find in his History) had in so great Account, that to advise with *Ahithophel*, was, in those Days, *as if one had enquired of the Oracles of God*: And this Esteem makes a Disgrace sit so much heavier on the Mind. But, *Secondly*, he saw the Consequences of his Counsel being rejected; he saw his new Choice, and the Party he had turned to, would be ruined, by the Advice of *Hushai the Archite*: He knew that *Absalom* would not be able to hold it long against his Father; he had lost his Opportunity, and given to *David* Time and Breath, which was the only Thing he wanted; and Leisure to the People of *Israel* to consider their Revolt, and to repent, and timely to make their Peace with their old King, by returning to their Duty and Obedience: This was the fatal Miscarriage of *Absalom's* Affairs, that *Ahithophel* saw clearly, and saw it was not to be retrieved, and saw, perhaps, the Treachery of *Hushai*, and his Design in giving such Advice. And he knew very well where *David's* Wrath would light, with all his Vengeance, when he should be resettled on his Throne again, namely, upon the *Evil Counsellors*, of which he was himself the Chief. He saw, the Heart of a good old indulgent Father, would (if he escaped with Life in Fight) quickly pass by, and spare the Rashness of a young and giddy Prince, his beloved Son; and discharge his Fury on the wicked Instruments that had seduced him to Rebellion: And you may see by the Tenderness and Care that *David* took of *Absalom*, in his Charge to *Joab*, before the Battle, and the Grief he felt upon his Loss; you may see by this, how rightly and truly *Ahithophel* judged of Matters, and how well he knew where the Storm at last would fall, even chiefly on himself, who had given such mischievous Counsel; that had it been pursued, *David* had certainly been lost. For this, he knew, he must pay down his Life, when *David* should return with Victory; there was no Pardon for one so able, and deep engaged in the Conspiracy as he: And therefore he resolves to prevent the Stroke of *David*, by one of his own. So that here is the Sense of a Disgrace past, in having his Counsel rejected; and the Fear of farther Shame and Pain to come (the Consequence (he saw) of his Counsel's not being followed) that occasioned him to fall into this desperate Resolution, of laying violent Hands upon himself.

When Men engage in any wicked Practice, as *Ahithophel* here did, and find themselves disappointed, and their great Purposes defeated, and they are brought to Shame, or into Danger, their Minds are not equal to their Burthen; their Stomach is so high, their Pride so great, that they know not what to do with that single Imagination, of *what the World will think or say of them*. All Men, they fancy, are Observers of their Actions, and have their Eyes upon them; and when they have miscarried, all Men censure, and reproach them, and condemn them. So that though they can bear the *Guilt* themselves, yet they cannot bear the *Shame* it occasions them with *others*; this oppresses and confounds them. I think one may observe, that in almost all these deadly Resolutions that People take against themselves, there is something *worldly* at the Bottom, that meets with some naughty Passion or other, that prevails against their Reason, and sets them on this bad Work. And what can one infer better, from this Example, than that every one should be extremely careful, how they engage themselves in Matters of great Difficulty, or Danger, lest the Disappointment be too great for them: And that not only in Matters certainly wicked and forbidden, but even in all others, where the Event, if not successful,



is like to be of great, but ill Consequence to them; for few People understand themselves thoroughly, or know the Strength or Weakness of their Minds, in great Trials; and therefore should not easily put themselves upon them.

But since the Accidents of Life, that are neither to be foreseen, nor prevented, trouble us as much as the Miscarriages of our own Designs deliberately laid; the next useful Caution may be, to have our Minds so prepared, and our Affections so subdued, and kept in so good Order, that the common Calamities of Life, though they may surprize, yet may not quite confound us: That we may not be so lost and destitute of Succour from our Reason, as to give our selves up to the Guidance of our present Passion, and follow where that leads: For this, indeed, is the common Lot of those who fall into the desperate Resolutions we are speaking of: Their Passions are always high, never controuled or checked, evermore indulged and yielded to; so that when grievous Accidents befall them, they know not whereabouts they are, nor whither to turn themselves: They can bear no Loss or Disappointment, nor fall from the Condition, in which they formerly were, but abandon themselves entirely to Sorrow and Despair. The Bottom of this Mischief is, that they place their whole Happiness in the Attainments of this World, in the possessing Riches, the enjoying Honours, and in the Praise and Approbation of Men: And therefore when the first make to themselves Wings and fly away, the Hearts of these People fail with them: when they fall from their Honours, and lose their Dignities, they know not how to breath in any other Air, nor how to want the Courtship and Respects that were wont to be paid their *Power* and *Interest*, not their *Persons*. When they lose their Credit and Esteem, and sink in their Reputation, whether deservedly or no, they are dejected to the lowest Ebb, they are afraid that every Eye that looks upon them, views them with Contempt, and that every Tongue is evermore reproaching them, which makes them ashamed of Light, and weary of Living.

Riches indeed are of great Use to the making Life easy; but the Happiness of Man's Life does not depend upon Abundance of Wealth: Some are Happy in a little, and all may be happier in less than they imagine: But, not to philosophize too much upon this Head, get what you can with Innocence and Honesty, with Virtue, and the Fear of God; and keep what you can with Justice to your Neighbour, and Charity to the Poor. That Poverty which I have now in my Eye, and which is sometimes the dreadful Occasion of the mischievous Designs I am speaking against; that Poverty is not, usually, the Want of Riches, which we never could obtain, but which we once were Masters of, and have lost, either by Accident, or viciously mis-spent. It is the Remembrance of our former Affluence, that makes our present Want so hard and insupportable, even when we are undone by unforeseen Calamities, and had no faulty Hand in bringing ourselves into these Streights. Yet such a Poverty as this, tho' attended with all Men's Pity, and no Reproach or Blame, is sometimes so laid to Heart, that the Man will not endure to live under it: than which there can be no Resolution more weak and unreasonable, tho' it were not sinful. Can one think the Life of Man should lie so much at the Mercy of every Accident, that may deprive one of one's temporal Estate? The Misery should seem much greater, where our own Vice has brought this Poverty upon us, and our Ill-husbandry reduced us to Extremity; for there we reflect upon our own Folly, and find it was we ourselves that did ourselves this Mischief; and as we bare the *Smart*, so we bare the *Blame* alone: When the Providence of God afflicts us, we submit to that; when the Malice of Man afflicts us, we lay the Fault there, and think of doing ourselves Right, too often, by severe Revenges. And when we afflict ourselves, we can no more help condemning ourselves, than others; and sometimes take, we see, as severe Revenges on ourselves, as we would on others. We must therefore take as much



much Care not to bring ourselves to these Extremities by ill Management; and vicious Courses, as we must not to provoke others to do us as great Mischiefs; because the Suffering is generally the same, and the Consequence, sometimes, much worse, and the End is Self-destruction. The Reproaches Men's own Hearts make them, when they have ruined themselves and their Families by Folly and wicked Courses, are often so sharp and painful, that, with all the Spirit and Courage they can get, they cannot bear up under them: And this is an Effect so sure and constant, that when it does not end in such deadly Violences, yet it ends in all manner of sottish, loose, and wicked Courses: And therefore Care, Sobriety, and frugal Courses are the best, if not the only Preservatives, against that furious Outrage, or that violent Grief, that the Sense of such a faulty Poverty throws Men oft into. A little Wisdom, moderate Resolutions, and strength of Mind, will keep a Man right at first, and hold him in the Ways of Goodness and Virtue; when a great deal of every one will be necessary to recal him, when he once has wandered. You do not know what a Change of Mind, a Change of Fortune, so much to the worse, will work in you, nor how you will be able to struggle with such Difficulties. Take Care therefore, in Time, to avoid the dangerous Experiment: The Reflections on your wicked Extravagancies will not make such Impressions, it may be, on your Mind, whilst you are able to feed, and continue them on, as they will, when all is gone; and you have nothing to divert you, but are left to be consumed, and eaten up (as it were) by them.

One is almost ashamed to warn People of falling into Poverty, occasioned by their Vice, for fear of Self-Murder; but that such Poverty is, now and then, the Occasion of such Violence, and the Fear of Want, the Parent of such desperate Resolutions. It is easy to see what must be said on these Occasions, when People have brought themselves to a Morsel of Bread; namely that it is an ill Way of repairing their past Folly and Wickedness by one to come, that will exceed them all, as much as Heaven is higher than the Earth: That the Misery they endure will end in Death at last, and it may be it will come quickly; and that the Sins that brought them to that Misery, will be forgiven upon Repentance, be they never so great and many: Whereas the Course they pitch upon to relieve themselves, is a Sin that admits of no Repentance, and consigns them to Pains and Sorrows that will have no End. These are Arguments that cannot possibly be answered; but for fear they should come too late, when Men are deaf to Reason, and the Mind is obstinately bent upon its wicked Purpose (as deep Woes do strangely fix the Resolution) it were much better that they should prevent their coming into such Necessities, as lay them open to these Temptations, by living in Sobriety, Temperance, and such Good-husbandry, as well befits their Estate and Condition.

Pre-eminence, moreover, Dignities, and Offices of Honours, are not only useful, but absolutely necessary to the good Government of the World; and without them there would be no Peace, no Order, no Society, or Civil Commerce among Men; and therefore they are, all of them, the Matter of a very lawful, laudable Ambition: And he who desireth an Office and Employ of Honour, provided he intend to discharge it well, and to do the Good that Office requires, does nothing but what he may Honestly do, altho' he also have his Eye upon the Recompence that goes along with it, and without it, would not undertake it. But then Men shew the Weakness of their Minds, when they have tied themselves so close and fast to these Employs and Honours, that when they come to part with them, it is as if their very Hearts were rent asunder; and they are full of deep Resentment, or a Sadness that is never to be removed, and oft precipitates their Death, and sometimes too by Violence. And though it does not *often* happen, that Men, who fall from their  
Honours



Honours and great Employs, do these cruel Violences to themselves, yet it *sometimes* does: And I am speaking now to a Practice that, God be thanked, never can be common; but yet which happens much too often, even as often as it happens.

And to make this Head more useful, it is certain that People of lesser Fortune and Figure are as much transported with Rage and Resentment, and take as mischievous Resolutions at their little Disappointments and low Falls, in their low Stations, as the greatest do at theirs, that make more Noise by falling higher: And therefore have equal need of taking Care, that the Love of Superiority, and Preference, and Distinction, take not such fast rooting in their Minds; but that if the Time of yielding come, they may do it without Impatience, Rage, and deep Resentment.

Credit, Esteem and Reputation, are also, *in the last Place*, so useful to the Well-being of Men, that all imaginable Care is to be taken to gain them, and secure them. There is not that Man in the World, but would be in the good Opinion of all he knows, and all that know him; nothing is easier to the Mind, nothing more useful to him, in all his Affairs, than that all Men should think well of him. Even the Conscience of our Innocence, and the full Certainty we have that we have not deserved an ill Reputation with this or that Man, cannot so fortify our Minds, but some Concern will arise in us, when we think thereon; and we had rather much stand right in their Opinion, though we have nothing to fear from them, nor any thing to hope for at their Hands. We are made so to depend upon one another, on purpose that we may do each other all good Offices: And the Bottom and Spring of all good Deeds being the good Opinion of their Deserts to whom they are done, it is necessary we should think well of other People; and as necessary to be well thought of by them, in order to receive their Favour. Upon these Accounts it is, that we see all Men so extremely careful to preserve and defend their Reputation and good Name: And therefore it is no Wonder, if the Loss, or Danger of it, affect Men very much, and sensibly afflict them: A Man, without it, thinks he lives amongst a Band of Enemies, who are only restrained by Fear, from doing him all manner of Mischief; or, if not this, yet that he is the Subject of their daily Scorn, which is falling lower, than if he were the Subject of their Anger or Revenge, because he would be thereby reckoned more considerable.

It is hard, that that which is so useful and delightful to every Man, should be lost so very easily; but so it must needs be with a Thing that is not in our own keeping, but in every Body's else, to give or take away, as Interest or Humour pleases. But though this be true in the general, that our Reputation depends upon other People; yet (to do the World Justice) a Man's Reputation with his Friends and Acquaintance, and such as know him pretty well, is very much in his own Hands, and will depend, in the Main, upon his Virtue and Discretion; the *first* of which is his inward Guide, and directing Principle; the *latter*, to govern his exterior Carriage and Behaviour. And therefore, an honest and prudent Man will keep up his Reputation with those who know him: His Honesty will make his Actions good and honest, and his Prudence will provide they shall be done in the best Manner. And when both Inside and the Appearance are right, a Man will hardly be in Danger of losing his Reputation with those he values most, and would be best esteemed by; although he may with such as know him not, and take up every Thing on trust. But indeed, the Infamy, Disgrace, and Shame that drive Men to those wicked Practices we are now especially intending to divert Men from, are generally grounded, not on Malice or Mistake, (though much of both is seen in all great Accusations) but upon Facts that are truly infamous and wicked: Men have done something that is either exceedingly unworthy of themselves, or mischievous to others, which excites both Amazement and Abhorrence in those who hear of it, and raises so loud a Cry against the Actors; that, striking first



upon the Imagination strongly, is never after out of their Ear; they think they hear of nothing but their Infamy, and that all Mouths are full of their Reproaches, and that every Look and Gesture speaks Contempt and Indignation at them: And fancying themselves to be thus unacceptable to all Abroad, and feeling themselves guilty at Home, there arises in their Minds such a Mixture of Grief and Shame, Vexation, Fear, Remorse, and other different Passions, that they are almost strangled with the rising of their own Thoughts: And, to deliver themselves from that insupportable Oppression, run headlong into Death, by the first Way their poor disordered Fancy prompts them to. The only Way therefore to avoid these dreadful Mischiefs, is, to continue in the Ways of Reason and Virtue, to be guilty of no Extravagancies, nor any such Practices, as draw the Hatred or Contempt of the World after them. And it is easier far to preserve our selves from these notorious Crimes and Follies, than, when they are committed, to guard our Minds against the wicked Suggestions they may offer. A Man in Innocence has a mighty Command over himself, above what he has, when Guilt, and Shame, and Fear have taken a full Possession of him, bewildered his Thoughts, dissipated all his Recollection, and enfeebled his Judgment.

I am still for *preventing* Mischiefs, rather than *remedying* it, because it is both more easy, and more safe. And although there is no Reason, but is strong enough to disparage and baffle all that can be said in the Behalf of these violent Attempts against our selves, when we are safe, and well, and free from any such Fears, and in no Danger of these Temptations: Yet when Men come into those perillous Hours, and fall into those Straits and Trials, they are generally deaf to all Reason and Argument, and listen only to the Suggestions of their present Passions; they do not *answer*, but they do not *hearken*, to what is said: So that if they be not prepared before-hand to withstand such Assaults, they seldom do it, when the Danger comes. *Achithophel* could much more easily have avoided practising against his King, and entering a Confederate with rebellious *Abshalom*, than, being once entred, could avoid giving the most pernicious Counsel to make the Breach between the Father and the Son irreconcilable, and, to cut the War short, by the Surprise of *David*, to secure himself and Party: He could more easily have stayed at Home, and been concerned with neither Party; than, being once engaged, to bear another's Counsel being preferred to his, and see himself neglected: He could more easily have followed *David*, and shared with him in the worst Fortune that could befall him (even though it had been to die with him) than, having made him his Enemy, to think of falling into his Hands, and dying the Death of Traytors. Here were a great many Things for him to choose, more safe and honourable than what he chose: And it was much more easy for him to choose any of them, than, having chosen amiss, and involved himself in great Dangers, to bear up, like a Man, under them, and not to be overcome with Shame and Fear, and take such desperate Resolutions, as he did. By all which, I mean to say, that Men have it much more in their Power to keep themselves Innocent, and out of Difficulties and great Straits; than, being once guilty and involved, to deliver themselves (not from their Dangers, but) from the distracted Counsels, and Suggestions, their Minds in such Confusion offer them; although they be such, as they themselves, when safe and sober minded, would have startled at and abhorred. They think it a Point of Wisdom, in their Straits, to embrace such Counsel, as would have been accounted mad, and senseless, in Prosperity. One Argument, therefore, to persuade Men to preserve themselves innocent and upright, and not to engage in Things hazardous and difficult, for fear the Disappointment should be too much for them; and their distracted Mind should put them upon mischievous and wicked Resolves: One such

Argument,



Argument, I say, is better, and like to prevail more than Twenty very fair and reasonable ones, when the Judgment is perverted, and the Understanding almost lost, and the Man is overwhelmed with Misery, neither inclined to *ask*, nor capable of *taking* Counsel, when it is offered him.

And thus, in Cases, where Religious Melancholy is the prevailing Humour, and drives poor People to these sad Extremities; how much easier and safer is it, to secure them at first from taking in such Principles as occasion these disquiet and perplexing Thoughts; than, having taken them in, to secure them against the Power and Influence of those Thoughts? Can any Thing be more reasonable to believe, than that God is the very best of Beings? That he transcends all other Beings, as much in Goodness, as in Power and Wisdom? That that Notion is formed as soon in our Minds, and enters as much into the Composition of the Deity, as any other? That a Being thus absolutely, and thus necessarily good, can never intend any Thing unmerciful or cruel; that it would be cruel and unmerciful for him, to make a Creature, with design of making it unspeakably miserable; that therefore this neither *is*, nor *can be* done by him; that therefore no Man was ever designed by God, originally and primarily, to be miserable in the World to come; but only made capable of being so, by sinning voluntarily and deliberately; and upon that Supposition, of being punished, and consequently miserable. But this will shew Men faulty, and God just, in punishing Offenders: That, whereas they think they ground this hard Opinion of God upon his revealed Will in Scripture; they might consider, that if any such Thing appeared *Literally*, yet that *that* could hardly be the Sense of the Place, which would destroy our natural Notions of the Godhead (as this Pre-ordination to eternal Misery would destroy the natural Notions we have of God's Justice and Goodness:) And next to that, might remember, that when Man fell into Sin, and must have perished in it, God was so transcendently Merciful, as presently to promise, and in his own due Time effected, the sending his only Son into the World, *that the World through him might be saved*: That this his Son did actually come into the World, and live for our Example and Instruction, and die for our Redemption, and made Satisfaction to God for all the Sins of the World; and, for the Merit of these Sufferings, was advanced to God's right Hand in Heaven, and made the Head of the Church; who before his going up to Heaven, commissioned his Apostles to preach to all the World, and teach them, that if they repented of their Sins, would believe in Jesus Christ, and be baptized in Matter and Form, as he required, and live in Obedience to God's Word, they should certainly be forgiven and saved. That these Invitations and Calls to Faith, to Repentance and Baptism, and to Rewards upon Conditions, were all of them inconsistent *with*, and contradictory *to* all manner of Predestination to Wickedness and Punishment: And that the whole Design of the Gospel is overturned by such a Scheme of Cruelty, and horrible Injustice; and that such Notions do utterly root out the Love of God from all Men's Hearts, and represent him worse, than one can do his Adversary; in as much as Revenge is somewhat better, than deliberate, unprovoked, and undeserved Cruelty. It is easier, I say, to persuade People, that God neither has, nor can predestinate any one to Misery; than, when they are once persuaded of such Doctrine, to divert them from the Consequences of it, that naturally *may*, tho' they *do not* always follow, either Carelessness under the Security of their Predestination to Life, or Despair under the Certainty of being lost for ever. I cannot tell how Men come to be persuaded to believe such hard Things of God, who is Goodness it self, as they never did or could believe of any Man living, though very bad, and their greatest Enemy: But it is easy to see, that when they do believe these Things, they are capable



capable of no Advice, or Comfort, if once they apply them to themselves; and take the dark Side.

Tell a Man, who labours under the Sense of much and frequently repeated Sin, and is ready to die under God's Displeasure, and is seeking out forbidden Means; tell him, that the Mercies of God in *Jesus Christ* are infinite, and that though his Sins be never so heinous, both for Weight and Number, yet they will all be pardoned on Repentance and Amendment, and his Soul be purified by the precious Blood of Christ; and he may turn his Heart to God, repent him of his Sins, and fall from his cruel Resolutions, and become a new Man. But bid him throw away that Instrument of Death, he has so carefully provided, when he believes he lies under the Sentence of God's Wrath, and sealed to Death by a Decree that is not to be reversed; and you do but talk to the Waves of the Sea, or the Winds, that hear as little. I know no Argument that can wrest away the Sword, that such a Persuasion puts into a Man's Hand. And, that such hard Opinions have no worse nor frequenter ill Consequences, is owing all to the Grace and Goodness of God. They are fitted to do more Mischief, but God is still the Governour of all, and loves us better than we do ourselves, or think *he* does, and prevents us from doing ourselves Mischief, by our reasoning falsely against him, because he sees us ignorant, and not malicious.

The Occasion *Ahithophel* took of destroying himself, led me to consider the Occasions that other People take to follow him in that bad Practice. And we may see, I think, in every one of them, (and as many others, as any one can reckon up) that some unlawful Passion or other is at the Bottom, that, meeting with some heavy Disappointment, gives this naughty Counsel. Pride, that disdains to be controuled; Self-conceit, that will endure no Preference, scarce Equality; the Love of unlawful Pleasure, that effeminates the Mind, and makes it unable to bear any Hardship or Calamity; such Love of Riches as makes Men fraudulent, or violent Oppressors, and puts them on shameful and unjust Courses, which, being detected, give them unspeakable Confusion both of Face and Heart; such Ambition of Honours, as puts Men on unlawful Courses to obtain them, or preserve them, and which they wear with Insolence, and use to the Hurt, and not the Defence of their Inferiours; so that they beget Envy and Malignity in People's Minds, and make them wish for their Fall, and rejoice when it comes: The Sense of which makes these haughty Minds, when fallen, the most abject, pitiful, and poor spirited Things that can be; well knowing that they, who have made no Friends in the Time of their Authority, will find none when they come to lose it; but be treated with the Scorn, and ill Usage they governed others with: For no Man who hath gained his Honours honestly, and used them moderately, and well, but will find Respect and Safety when he lays them down: And Shame, and Infamy, and Danger belong only to shameful, infamous, and injurious Practices: They who have done no Evil, will be afraid of none. Do but live in the Credit and Esteem, that virtuous honest Practices will give, and you will never fly to Death to deliver you from Disgrace and Infamy, from Men's Reproaches, and despiteful Usage.

I do not however affirm, that in all Resolutions of the bad kind we are speaking to, some vicious Passion *is* at the Bottom: But in general, it is, I believe, so: They may proceed also from great Weakness of Mind, false Principles, and from Mistakes in Religion; which though they are not Sins, yet produce most sad Effects, and are only to be prevented by thinking as well of God, as they do of any good Man they know. Nor have I taken any Pains to shew, how little any of these Causes or Occasions can justify or excuse the sad Effects of them: for having shewed you, I hope, before, that this Practice was forbidden of God, and consequently



quently sinful, I had no need to prove, that nothing can excuse a downright Sin ; but rather warn you, to avoid those dangerous Paths that have, we think, led others to Destruction : For, he who does not look to the Temptation and the Snare, shall, in vain, resolve against the Sin and Danger to which they lead.

## S E R M O N III.

II SAMUEL XVII. VERSE 23.

*And when Ahithophel saw that his Counsel was not followed, he saddled his Ass, and arose, and gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father.*

**H**AVING already (in considering these Words) spoken, in the *First place*, to the disastrous End *Ahithophel* came to, namely, that *he hanged himself and died*; and shewed how unlawful an Act that was in him, and would be so in any one besides : And, in the *Second*, to the Occasion of it, namely, because *he saw his Counsel was not followed*; and shewn from thence, that it is evermore some naughty Passion at the Bottom, meeting some Disappointment, that irritates the Mind to such unreasonable and desperate Resolutions, of which we ought to take great Care : I am now to go on, and consider, *Thirdly*, that which was previous to this Fact ; *He arose, gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order* : And, *Lastly*, what followed, *he was buried with his Father*.

In the *Third place* then, *He arose, gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order*. He could not long endure that Place and Company, where the Scene of his Disgrace lay (as he thought) especially : And yet, if he had reasoned right, he had found, that the longer he had tarried there, the more he had been respected ; the more destructive and unreasonable his Rival's Advice had appeared ; and every Hour had discovered how wise and necessary *his own* was, at that Juncture : And he had seen *Hushai* either slighted as a weak Counsellor, or suspected as a Treacherous one, and himself again the Oracle. But to be *Second* is, it seems, with Statesmen, to be no Body ; his Rage and Ambition would not let him consider, nor wait for an Event that would justify his Wisdom and Forefight to *Abalom*, and all the hasty Council of War. But this was not all ; his wise Counsel was not only defeated, but that Defeat, he saw, would prove the utter Ruin of *Abalom*, and all his Party : So that *Ahithophel's* Fear would no more permit him to stay in the Camp *secure*, than his Ambition would let him sit in the Council-Chamber *contented*. Upon these Principles, *He arose, gat him home to his own House, and set his Household in order*. In which Words, there is nothing observable, but that he acted very *deliberately* : Had he been warned of God, that he should shortly die, as King *Hezekiah* was, he could have done no more, nor otherwise than he here did : *He would have risen, and hasted home, and have set his House in order*.



Here is *one* Man in the World, at least, that seems to have destroyed himself with Deliberation, and without any visible Marks of Distraction. This Thing, we know, seldom or never happens in our own Country: *Here*, every one is downright mad, that makes away himself by any manner of Means; he could not, else, act so against the Principles of Self-preservation, the Laws of Nature, Revelation, his own Interest and Honour. These are the Arguments, our *Pity*, rather than our *Reason* makes upon these sad Occasions; and Pity rather to the *Living* than the *Dead*. And should the Laws of the Land take no Cognizance of these Violences, should such a Death have no Consequence with respect to the temporal Estate of the surviving Relations; ten People, I believe, to one, now, would be found to be Self-Murderers; and the publick Judgment would (were there to be one made) be much the same with that of private People.

Is it not manifest, in all Cases besides this one, that People can and do deliberately do themselves the greatest Mischiefs, without any manner of Suspicion of having lost their Reason and Senses, as those Words are, in this Case, understood to signify? Do not Men daily venture to provoke God's Vengeance, by the most daring Impieties, with as much Understanding and Sobriety, as they shew in any other faultless Action of their Lives? Do they not venture Liberty and Life by a thousand Villanies, which they commit against each other, every Day, by a Malice most perperse and serious, and with most studied Artifice, although they know that, if discovered, they shall surely pay down their Heads for what they do? Do not Men, by Riots and Excess of every kind, hazard their Health and Life almost every Day they live, although they see the Mischief that will follow unavoidably, not at a Distance, but in View before them? Is Man so wise and so considerate a Creature, that he will not knowingly, and resolutely defy the Justice of God and Man, and all the Effects of Vice and Wickedness, and most audaciously hazard Soul and Body, Health and Reputation, both in this World, and that to come? And do we say, these People are *distracted*, and excuse them by loss of Reason and Understanding? I am not saying hereby, that Self-Murderers are no more mad than all these other desperately wicked People are: But I say, that to conclude a Self-Murderer is therefore mad, because he acts so like a Madman, against Nature, Reason, Religion, and Self-preservation, is not a right Way of concluding: because, by the same Rule, all the enormously wicked ones of the World might be judged mad, with as much Reason as the others, since, doubtless, they act as much against all Principles of Reason, and Self-security, as they. And yet the World does not conclude these wicked People mad; they think it is not quite so well with them: their Reason, Sense, and Understanding make them accountable to God and Man, and will most certainly condemn them.

The People, who truly want their Sense and Understanding, do indeed often fall into Mischief, and often do great Violence to themselves; but, generally speaking, they seek not Mischief as their *End*, but fall into it accidentally, as blind Men do into a Pit: They do not make it their Design, nor pitch upon the Means that are most sure and proper to effect such Purpose; one may commonly see some notable Failure in their Projects: But in these sorts of Violence there is a fixt Design, an End most stedfastly pursued; and Means most suitable and proper pitched upon, and renewed with a most obstinate Resolution and Firmness, again and again, upon a Disappointment; there is hardly any Action of their Life carried on with more Contrivance, than that which is to put an End to it: And if the Design were right, they would be counted rather *cunning* Men, than *mad* or senseless; so that it is plain these People make their Judgment from the Event only, which is doubtless very wrong: For though the End be never so naught, unreasonable and wicked



wicked; yet a Man is not therefore mad when he chooses it, but naught, unreasonable, and wicked. A Man, indeed, is in some sense mad, when he is under the Dominion of any of his Passions; and out of the Government of Reason: But because a Man's Reason is given him by God, to govern himself withal, and to keep his Passions in good order; therefore Men do not excuse the mischievous Effects of any of these Passions, by saying *the Man was mad*. And when one Man kills another with equal Deliberation, with as much Preparation and Contrivance, as some Men shew in dispatching themselves; he is not commonly acquitted by making it *Man-slaughter*, but found guilty of *Murder*: And there can be no Reason for this, but that in Self-Murder no Body else receives Damage, for whom the Jury might be concerned; which shews they rather consider the Mischief that is done, than the State and Disposition of Mind with which it is done.

Neither do I, by this, intend to say, that they who commit these Violences on themselves, are not deprived of their Sense and Reason; but that it is not *always* so: It were indeed to be wished much rather, that all Self-Murderers were truly distracted, than that any should be so with Reason and Sense entire and sound. But all the World sees the Contrary; there are many of them go about this Business as regularly, leisurely, and deliberately, as *Achithophel* here did, *They rise, get them to their own home, and set their Household in order*, just as he did; they resolve on it a good while before, they pursue it steadily; they sometimes justify this Practice, and defend it by Principles; so that, upon some pressing Calamity, one may expect such an Issue from them before it actually comes to pass: And yet, when it comes to pass, it is all one; it is as if they had been suddenly seized with Frenzy, and they had been distracted but an Hour before: The *Jury* and the *Coroners* see nothing but the sad Event, and, in Commiseration to the surviving Relations, if any thing be to be saved to them, declare them distracted; and *no Man but a mad Man would destroy himself*, is all that is said to justify such a Sentence. Which is what is by no Means true, and what they know the Contrary to, in almost every single Case but this. And in this they are, as I said, only misguided by their Pity; they spare the Dead, to do some Kindness to the Living; and since no Body else but the Relations suffer by such a Violence, they shall suffer no more than they needs must, by the natural Consequences of such a Loss.

Too much Pity cannot, indeed, be shewn to those who are made so miserable by these violent Deaths: But who can tell but less Pity would be needful, if less Pity were shewn, on such Occasions? The strictest Discipline, in Camps, is attended with fewer Executions than if it were more remiss: And a severe exacting Justice, in Execution of the Laws, prevents abundance of Offences in the Civil State. And there are fewer Duels in *France* than *England*, although the Country is, without compare, much larger, and the Humours of that People much more volatile, and easy to be moved than ours: And this, for a Reason very obvious, and reproachful to us, *namely*, that few or none are ever pardoned; but Justice is *there* as blind and relentless, as the Rage of Men, that makes work for her, is *here*. Who can tell, but a severer Sentence past upon Self-Murderers, would make fewer of them? And the utter Ruin of some few Fatherless and Widows, prevent a great many more from being Fatherless and Widows? The Laws of almost all wise Nations, have had that in their Eye, in enacting Penalties: They have punished Wife and Children, and undone whole Families, for the Offence of a single Person, the Head of them, not for want of knowing how innocent they were, but with Intention of restraining those Heads within the Bounds of Duty, for fear of hazarding and hurting those who were so innocent, and whom they loved, and were obliged to love, and to secure from Want, and Shame, and Misery, and make



make as happy as they could : Following herein the Example of God himself, *Who will visit*, he says, *the Children to the third and fourth Generation of them who hate him ; i. e.* who keep not that Commandment of abhorring Idols, with no other purpose, than to keep the Fathers faithful to his Service.

It were therefore to be wished, that an Experiment of this Kind were now and then made, to see if it might not be more useful to the preventing these Misfortunes, than the merciful Courses that are now generally taken, to bring in all *Distracted*, and so absolve them all from any legal Suffering, and punishing neither the Dead with Infamy, nor the Living with any Loss of Estate or Goods.

The Consideration of disgracing and undoing Wife, and Children, and Family, is intended, we see by the Laws, to restrain the Fathers of Houses from offending, who would be more at Liberty, if they themselves were only concerned, and were not to involve those near Relations in Ruin : Why should not this have its Influence also, to prevent some Self-Murthers, if the utter undoing of Wife and Children (as far as Loss of all temporal Estate will do it) were sure to follow such a Violence ? The Laws intend it should ; and it is reasonable to hope some good Effects would follow, if such Laws were duly executed. And can any one tell, whether they, who will always shew *Mercy*, when *Justice* is due, do not encourage those Misfortunes by their Pity, and make Men easier to destroy themselves, because they see it will have no worse Consequence to their Relations, than if they died a natural Death ? These Things are surely of some Consideration. And if some Examples were wisely made, they might deter a great many rash and wicked Enterprizes of this Nature.

And so might also the Consideration of what I am about to say, under the *fourth and last Head*, concerning what followed this wicked Fact of *Abithophel* ; and that is, that *he was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father*. *Josephus* says indeed, (*De B. J. l. 3. c. 14.*) that if any amongst the *Jews* kill themselves, it is decreed, that till the Sun go down, they shall be unburied. This does not appear any where in the Law of *Moses* ; and the Example of *Abithophel*, in the Text, is against it ; for he, we see, *was buried*, and that *in the Sepulchre of his Father* : So that this Decree was made in After-times, by Civil Authority, and it reached no farther than not burying by *Day-light* ; as if Self-Murther were to be counted a Deed of Darkness, and treated accordingly.

Among the *Greeks*, *Aristotle* says, it was generally received, that the dead Bodies of Self-Murderers should be disgraced some way or other ; and they could find no other way to do it, than by denying them Burial. So when an unaccountable Frenzy had seized the *Milesian* Maids, and they hanged themselves in great Numbers, the Magistrates knew not how to repress, and put a stop to this growing mad Humour, but by ordering them to be carried out to Burial *naked*, with the Cords about their Necks, which they had used to that bad purpose : And the Sense of this Dishonour had, by good Fortune, the intended Effect ; for the rest were so moved at the shameful Spectacle, that they fell into their old Sobriety and Order again, and made no more Attempts of that kind : And yet, *Gellius* says, from *Plutarch*, that these poor Creatures were under the Power of a Distemper ; but the Fear of such an infamous Burial, brought them to their Senses again : And so we may observe, I think, that in most of these light Distractions, the Reason is not so entirely lost, but that the Parties are capable of some sort of Arguments, and restrained by some particular Considerations, and Motives, of Love, or Fear, or Shame, or Honour.

The Christians also have thought fit (to shew in what Degree of Abhorrence they had this Practice) to deny them Christian Burial, who have laid violent Hands upon themselves ; and (not to trouble myself, or you, with what hath been the Practice heretofore of the antient Christians, or is now of other Churches) it is directed so,

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in the first *Rubric*, before our *Burial-service*; which is, you know, confirmed by *Act of Parliament*; by which it becomes a Law of the Land, as well as of the Church. They are there ranked with Persons *Unbaptized*, and such as die *Excommunicated*; by which we may conclude, she reckons not Self-Murderers among the Number of the *Faithful*; nor accounts them to be true Christians, and therefore cannot have that Hope of them, as she has of other Believers, who die in the Faith of Christ, and with Repentance, (for ought that appears;) and therefore cannot say the same Things of them in her Publick Prayers.

And as the Church denies them Christian Burial, so the Civil Government did heretofore appoint they should be put into the Earth, and left there with a lasting Mark of Infamy; *They were to have a Stake driven through them*, which was not to be removed.

But notwithstanding both these Penalties, intended both by Church and State, to deter all others from the like unnatural and wicked Attempts, by these Disgraces and Dishonours done to the Dead, they are now buried as other good Christians are, because they are brought in *Distracted*. And if it be indeed so, there is no Reason why either the Civil Power should mark them with any Infamy, or why the Church should not have good Hope of them, who, tho' unfortunate, are yet as much in God's Favour, as those who are visited with any other Distemper, and happen to die, (as many do) without their Reason, and Senses. No Body can, with any Reason, conclude ought to the Prejudice of People that are truly Distracted; for they are not Masters of themselves, nor consequently accountable for what they do, or omit to do: For *Revelation* being the Rule by which they are to walk, with respect to God, and Reason being the Faculty or Power by which they are to *apply* that Rule, their Rule must needs be unapplied, by their Defect of Reason. Now if the Civil Power has placed it in the Hands of a *Jury*, to determine whether such a Self-Murderer were Distracted or no, and made them the proper Judges; I do not see but that, as the *State* does, so must the *Church* acquiesce in such a Judgment, as those legally impowered Men think fit to give. As Judges themselves give Sentence, not always according to their private Perswasion or Belief, but according to the publick Verdict of the *Jury*. This I say the rather, because it is, perhaps, the proper Justification of the Clergy, when any of these Self-Murderers are buried according to Form. They are directed by the publick Judgment, and not by their private Opinion: For should a Man be accidentally found dead, and the *Jury* should think fit to bring him in guilty of Self-Murder, the Minister, tho' he believed the contrary never so firmly, must not yet bury that Man according to Form; because the Law is his Rule of Acting, and not his private Belief. The Law says, that Self-Murderers, or those who lay violent Hands upon themselves, shall not be buried in such a Manner; but the Law does not say, *who* are Self-Murderers, but leaves that to such and such particular People; the Minister of the Law is therefore, in this Point, to know who are Self-Murderers, from *their* Mouth, not from his own, nor yet from the Opinion of the Publick. Now if a Minister may not bury the Dead, which are brought in guilty of Self-Murder, tho' he believe verily they died a natural Death, only because the Law says, Self-Murderers shall not be so buried; how should he be obliged to *refuse* burying the Dead, which are by Law brought in Distracted, altho' he may well suspect they died by Violence, and with Deliberation? *i.e.* Why should not the Law be his Rule in one Case, as well as it is in the other? if the Scruple be, that the *Rubric* does not determine whether these People be distracted or not, in their Senses, or out of them: But only whether they laid violent Hands on themselves, or no? The Answer is, That a *violent* Death is opposed to a *natural* one, which is not chosen, but unavoidable; but People may



be poisoned through Ignorance and Mistake; and they may fall from a Precipice; and they may shoot themselves accidentally: and the *Event* is the same as if they had chosen these Deaths, but not the *Fault*; and there must be some, who are to judge whether they were *Voluntary* or *Casual*. And it is not to be presumed the Church would condemn such as died these Deaths, tho' violent, yet accidentally, nor deny them the Favour of her Christian Offices; she must therefore trust some People to judge, whether these People died Voluntarily or Casually, and her private Ministers must be determined by this Judgment: And since true Distraction is as innocent and blameless, as any other Ignorance or Mistake can be, she will no more deny her Christian Offices to one, than to the other: And therefore if a Christian, truly Distracted, lay violent Hands upon himself, she may as well hope well of him, as of one who died a violent Death, by Poison, falling from a Precipice, or accidental Shot, and consequently bury him in Form, as she does, I think, the other. And in this Case she trusts the same People with judging and determining, who they are that lay violent Hands upon themselves, that the Civil Power trusts; and she acts according to *their* Judgment, and not according to the private Judgment of her several Ministers, Ecclesiastical or Civil. This, I think, will justify the Clergy, from contracting any Irregularity, by burying in Form those who are brought in Distracted, as well as it will the Civil Officers, for not seizing on the Estate and Effects of the Deceased, which are forfeited by Law, if they were not Distracted; altho' both Civil and Ecclesiastical Ministers may be persuaded, that the Parties deceased were indeed Self-Murderers; because the Laws do not trust them to *judge*, but to *execute* according to the Judgment of other People. You see then, that the whole Matter devolves upon the *Jury*; and therefore, if the constant Mitigation of the Rigours of the Law against Self-Murderers, be any manner of Encouragement to fall into that Practice, it will behove the *Jury* to consider well, whether the favourable Verdict they generally bring in, be always so Righteous and so Seasonable as they imagine: Whether, since the Wisdom of the Laws intends, that the Confiscation of Estates, the Undoing a Family, the shameful Burial she appoints, and the Denial of Christian Offices, shall deter Men from these horrible Attempts, the Mercy that defeats all these Intentions so constantly, be not more likely to continue on, than to repress these cruel Violences. This is what I said will deserve to be better considered, than it commonly is: For such is the natural Affection a Man bears to his Wife and Children, Family and Dependents; such is the Respect he has to his own Fame, such the Kindness he bears even to his own dead Body, that were he sure his Estate would be forfeited, and his Effects carried from his Family; were he sure he should be buried in the Highway, and with a Stake driven through him as a Mark of huge Infamy, and sure he should not be buried like a Christian, with those last Offices, perhaps he would give way to calmer Counsels, and be content to bear his Shame, or Pain, or Loss, till God saw fit to put an End to all his sufferings by natural Means. And therefore an Instance or two of such Severity as is legal, well and wisely chosen, might prove a greater Preservative against these Violences, than such a constant and expected Mercy, as we always find, on these Occasions: For Men have now no Fear of *Laws*; and when they have laid aside the Fear of God, they go about this Business with great Readiness, they are sure of Favour in *this* World, and they will venture the *other*.

And if it be thought, that the Men who will venture God's Displeasure, will be little moved with any lesser Consideration of this Life, every Day's Experience may convince us of the Contrary, and shew us, that God is offended much more cheaply, and easily, than any Neighbour we have, and that we really value his Anger, and his Threatnings less, than the least legal Penalties: However, it were good  
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to try, now and then, whether the Execution of the Laws made to deter Men from Self-Murder, would not have better Effect, than the Courses that are generally taken, we see, have. And the Examples should be made (if one might choose) of some such as have lived very riotously and loosely, and spent almost all their Substance; and such as have justified and defended, in their Lives, the like Practice in other People, maintaining it by Principles. The riotous and loose Livers would deserve this Usage best, and they would find the least Pity from the serious Part of Mankind; and such a Punishment might be a Check to others, and keep them within bounds, and make them better Husbands, which is a Thing of more Consequence than People imagine, Frugality being the Parent of many Virtues, and a Restraint to many Vices and Enormities. And if they, who have been known to justify these Practices by Principles, whilst they lived, were sure to be made Examples above others; it might help to restrain others from taking such Liberties in Discourse, and from encouraging, thereby, those who would not, it may be, be so forward, without those bad Instructors. Such People will best deserve to be disgraced, and treated with all Rigour, because they do not only do this Wickedness themselves, but endeavour to propagate their destructive Principles, and such would meet with least Compassion; which Thing is always to be heeded in making Examples.

There will be room enough for Pity, and a tender Regard, to such whose unhappy Constitution, Make, and Frame, wrong Education; false and mistaken Principles; with great Weakness both of Body and Mind; long and continued Pains, and dreadful and amazing Calamities, have driven to these Extremities. If Laws and Rules are ever to be broken, it were for such whose Miseries intitle them to all the World's Pity, and who have lived a regular, a sober, virtuous, nay, and a religious Life. There, one has room to think, these violent Deaths might proceed from incurable Melancholy, and true Distraction; and not from sudden, desperate, and impious Resolutions, which are usually the Fruits of a Life passed in luxurious, vicious and ungodly Courses; when at last Men find themselves overtaken with dreadful Poverty, or see the Infamy and Ruin that has long been owing to them; come upon them with a Force that is not to be withstood by such as have abused their Reason, and neglected all Religion. And indeed, without Religion, both Reason and Virtue will be found deficient, under these Temptations, if Reason and Virtue ever can be found without Religion. Take away the Belief of God, and the Life of the Soul, and of Rewards and Punishments in the other World, and the Miseries of human Life may sometimes be so pressing, that all the Considerations this World can afford, will hardly make it tolerable. But when a Man considers himself to be a Creature of God's making, and subject to his Laws and Government by all the Reason in the World, and to the common Dispensations of his Providence, and consequently not at Liberty to withdraw himself from the Service appointed to him; and tied, moreover, by Command, and, if a Christian, by voluntary Undertaking, to submit to the Will of God, in all Conditions of Life; to accept the Evil with the Good, to be thankful for the one, and to improve under the other, by making good Use of it: When he considers this, and that there is also a Life to come, where it will be impossible to fly from God, (though we should do it here) and that the Miseries, our Disobedience and Impatience here would entail upon us, are in no sort to be compared with those which we escape by Death (which, tho' exceeding sharp, are yet not capable of being very long) when these, and such like Considerations, as Religion will supply the Mind with, come to Mens Assistance in their Streights, they will, with the Grace of God, vanquish the strongest Temptations to these Violences. We must therefore oppose the Will and Command



mand of God, to the Desires of present Ease we have, in our Distress, and the future Mischiefs of his Displeasure, to the present ones we labour under, whether of Fear, or Pain, or Shame. And we shall then see, to whether Side it is fittest to incline; whether the short Afflictions which are here, as it were but for a Moment, may be compared with the Wrath of God, which abideth for ever. In a Word, unless the Mind be fortified with Arguments of Religion, and Considerations of the other Life, our natural Fortitude and Patience will yield to many violent Temptations, that beset Men in this Vale of Misery. And therefore, few Attempts of this kind are made, till either Religion is wholly mastered, and its Impressions quite effaced, or Men are so misguided, as to think these Mischiefs may be done, and Religion (as not concerned) be safe notwithstanding. But it is more consistent with Reason to lay aside all Religion, and disbelieve the whole, than, allowing the Justice of God, and the Life of the World to come, to think these Self-Murderers are not to account severely for the Violences they have offered to themselves, if they are not indeed (what they are commonly reputed) quite lost to Reason, and distracted; of which God will judge much better than we can do.

As for those unhappy People, who lying under the dreadful Apprehension of God's Anger, accounting themselves *Vessels of Wrath, and fitted for Destruction*; and not being able to live under the Torment of that Thought, put an End to their miserable Lives; as they are most to be pitied whilst alive, so there seems to be the greatest Reason for sparing them when dead, since nothing in the World can look so like Distraction as that Distemperature of Brain, which makes them reason and act so strangely: For if they are, indeed, Vessels of Wrath; Is this the Way to give them any Ease? If they believe themselves consigned to Pain and Misery in the other World, what do they get by throwing themselves into that Place of Torment before their Time? This is to die for fear of Death, and indeed a great deal worse.

When condemned Criminals prevent their legal Punishment by dispatching themselves, they think they save themselves the Shame of dying publicly by infamous Hands: Vain Imagination that! But what can these poor People propose to themselves, by falling into the Hands of the Living God a great deal sooner than (even according to their own Fears) they need to do, if they would live as long as God would let them? Can any Thing be liker Madness than this, under such Persuasion? But such Persuasion is, itself, the Maddest that a Christian can be filled with. These People are, very frequently, very good People; or if they have been Sinners, they have long repented, and amended. It is the Sense of their Guilt that lies so heavy on them; they would give all the World to be forgiven; they believe in God, and in Jesus Christ, the Resurrection, Life everlasting, and the World to come: They believe that Christ died to save Sinners: They do not know *one* Sinner in the World, besides themselves, for whom they do not think that Christ died, if that Sinner would repent, and believe the Gospel. Is it not near to Madness, to believe that Christ died for such as repent, and believe the Gospel, and yet to distrust he died for *me*, who am so sorry for my Sins, that I would give the World (if it were mine) I never had committed them? and would not, for any earthly Thing, commit the like again? And would purchase the Favour of God with my Blood, and who am quite oppressed with the Dread of his Displeasure? If this be not repenting and believing, no one can say what is; and yet this is the Case of many of these unhappy People. Nothing therefore can be liker, or nearer to Distraction, than so to believe, and so to repent, as both to sorrow and amend, and yet conclude themselves *Vessels of Wrath*, and under God's Displeasure: For nothing is so contrary to all Sense and Reason, and the whole Tenor of the Gospel, as to believe that God

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is not reconciled to all penitent Believers in Jesus Christ ; and, without this, Christianity would fall to the Ground. These People, therefore, shut their Eyes to all the Light that can be opened on them ; and by making such Conclusions as must be false, if Christianity be true, are not only Miserable, but give such Marks of a wrong Turn in their Head, that to conclude they are near Distraction, is not only Charitable, but Reasonable. These Things I have been led to say, in considering the Case of *Self-Murder*, which, from the Whole, will appear not only a huge Misfortune ; but also, where Men have their Sense and Reason, a great and crying Sin ; and which, according to the Gospel-Covenant, excludes our Hope, by cutting off Repentance, upon which it is grounded. If there be any Room for Charity, it is, that though all we see is wrong, yet we may not see all that truly is in the Condition of these poor People ; but God *does*, and he is infinitely Merciful, and doubtless will Consider, with his usual Goodness, all that can possibly deserve his Pity and Forgiveness. And tho' he is just, yet is his Justice tempered with such Mercy, that even the most provoking Sinner may desire, with *David*, *rather to fall into the Hands of God than Man.*



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## S E R M O N

Preached before Her Majesty at St. James's, on *Wednesday*, April 4. 1705.

## DEUTERONOMY XX. VERSE I.

*When thou goest out to Battle against thine Enemies, and seest Horses and Chariots, and a People more than thou, be not afraid of them ; for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt.*

**I**N speaking to these Words, we have to consider, *First*, The Command or Counsel here given to the *Jews*, *Not to be afraid* of the Horses, Chariots, and superiour Number of their Enemies, when they went out to fight. *Secondly*, The Reason here assigned, *For the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt.* And *Thirdly*, To see how this Advice is applicable to us, as Christians.

*First*, Of the Command or Counsel here given; *When thou goest out to Battle against thine Enemies, and seest Horses and Chariots, and a People more than thou, be not afraid of them.* If there were any Dispute of the Lawfulness of Wars invasive and offensive, where there is equal Reason and Necessity, as of defensive ones, these Words would conclude much in their Favour ; for, *going out to Battle against their Enemies*, looks as if they rather went to *prevent* Invasion, than to *repell* it : But since no Body doubts the Justifiableness of the *Jewish* Wars, we have only to see to the Counsel here given, not to fear Horses, Chariots, or superiour Numbers ; for all these Things are naturally dreadful.

The *Jewish* Army consisted wholly of Infantry or Foot, and for a great while they had no Horse at all ; the Country it seems bred none, and they were forbid to go down to *Egypt* to provide themselves of any. *Egypt* was famous for furnishing Horses ; and whether it were, that the *Jews* were forbid to go to *Egypt*, for fear their Commerce with that idolatrous Country should endanger their Manners, and cause them to incline to the Worship of many Gods, as the rest of the Nations did, and to which they were strangely prone on all Occasions ; or whether it were, that the *Jews* should always remember the Deliverance God had wrought for them, in bringing them out of *Egypt*, with a high Hand, and stretched out Arm, notwithstanding the infinite Multitude of Horsemen and Chariots with which their Enemies pursued them to the *Red Sea* ; whether this, or any undiscovered Reason stood in the Way, it is manifest the *Jewish* Army had no Horse, and consequently no Chariots of War, as other People had, --- at least for a great while, even to the  
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Days of King *David*. It seems indeed, as if God intended to distinguish the *Jewish* Armies from all other Armies, as well as the People from other People, in most Particulars; and would let both them, and all the World perceive, that they were not to be defended by the usual Means, but by his Power alone, who had brought them out of *Egypt* in so strange a manner. And therefore, when that perverse People grew weary of God's Government, and desired a King, and to be governed like the Heathen round them, God ordered *Samuel* to tell them, that among other Instances of the hard Government their Prince would set up, *He would take their Sons, and appoint them for himself, for his Chariots, and to be his Horsemen*, 1 Sam. viii. 11. which Thing they also did; so that in Time, *Chariots and Horsemen* came in use among them, and signified the Strength and Defence of a Kingdom among the *Jews*, as well as other People: And therefore the King calls the dying Prophet, *My Father, my Father, the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof*, 2 Kings ii. 12. i. e. their Strength and their Security. But it was not thus from the beginning; they had neither Horse, nor Chariot; which being judged so serviceable in War, as appeared by their general Use, no wonder if they struck Terror into the Minds of those who either wanted them, or were forbidden to use them. This may be an Account why the *Jews* are bid in particular not to be afraid of their Enemies *Horse and Chariots*; but in the general, those Words do only signify the Warlike Provisions of any kind, made use of by their Enemies against them. And so we are to understand Psal. xx. 7. *Some put their Trust in Chariots, and some in Horses, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God*. This appears also, from their being commanded not to be afraid of a superior Number: *When thou seest a People more than thou, be not afraid of them*. So that the *Jews* are counselled here, that when they went out to fight, and saw their Enemies superior in Provision, Strength, and Number, they should not be afraid of them.

But how is this to be avoided, since these Advantages will naturally, and very reasonably cause Fear, even in the wisest and the strongest Hearts? The Chances (as they call them) of War are so many, and the Turns so strange and sudden, that even when all Things are more than equal on their Side; yet can neither the oldest, the bravest, nor the most experienced Warriours, forbear fearing for the Event. There must therefore be something particular in the Reason assigned, to make it possible for the *Jews* to comply with such a Command, as not to fear their Enemies, with such Advantages upon their Side.

And so, in the *second Place*, there was; the Reason carries great Force with it, and seems to be able to bear down all before it,—*For the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt*. The Lord God, in Opposition to the Gods of the Nations round, which were but Idols, and could neither help themselves, nor others; and the Lord thy God, as in Covenant with them, and distinguishing them from the rest of the World, by most peculiar Favours and Blessings bestowed upon them, and known especially to them, and all the Nations round, by having brought them up, *out of the Land of Egypt*, in a Manner the most glorious and astonishing, and in all its Circumstances remarkably memorable to all Posterity. They had therefore on their Side One to depend upon, who not only *could*, but who *had already* done the greatest Things for them; they did not only know He was All-powerful, but had lately seen Him exercise that Heavenly Power on their Behalf on all Occasions: They had seen that *both the Chariot and Horse were fallen*; and that nothing could prevail against those whom God would help, but that whom he blessed, *were and must be blessed*. This therefore was the Reason why they were not to be afraid of their Enemies, although so strong and well provided; they had *the Lord for their God*, one who was Almighty in Power, and whose Goodness they had



had long experienced, both they and their Fathers; who had brought them up out of *Egypt*, and who had covenanted to bless them in all their righteous Undertakings, and prosper all their righteous Wars against their Enemies, provided they kept the Law that he gave them, and served no other Gods but him. Upon these Conditions, God would be their God, and they should be his People; and whilst they observed these, they were sure of Success; no Sword, no Weapon, that was formed against them, could prevail; they needed not to be afraid of either Horses, Chariots, or a *People more than they*. This was God's Conduct with respect to his People *Israel*; and therefore it required but an Act of the easiest Faith imaginable, to go out against their Enemies in righteous Wars, undertaken by his Command or Approbation, with all the Confidence possible, and full Assurance of Success; they knew their Captain was Almighty, *the Lord of Hosts*; they knew it was as easy for him to save by few, as by many; they had experienced this, in his delivering them from a People infinitely more than they, and well provided with Horses and Chariots, whom they had seen troubled from Heaven, and overthrown in the *Red Sea*: And they had the same Promise of Success, by the same Assistance, in all their righteous Undertakings. Such Counsel therefore, or Command, as this in the Text, *Not to fear Horses and Chariots, or a People more than they*, might very well be complied with, by considering, faithful People, when *the Lord their God was with them, who had brought them up out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage*.

But what is this to those who have not these Encouragements, nor any such sure Promises? How far can *We*, or other *Christians*, make Application of such Passages to our selves, or in what sort depend upon them? This is the *Third and Last Thing* to be considered. And,

*First*, It must be confessed, that we are not under the same Dispensation with the *Jews* at this Time, and for some Hundreds of Years after these Words were delivered by *Moses* from God. He was pleased to train up the *Jews* in Obedience, by Promises of temporal Blessings of all sorts, as well in War as Peace; this is not stipulated for in the Christian Covenant, and therefore not to be depended on, as promised. It seems indeed to have been but temporary with the *Jews* themselves; after they had made a general Forfeiture (as it were) of God's Favour, by their Apostasies, and foul Idolatries, the Promises of Success in Wars seem to have ended on God's Part, and they were brought under the common Providence; for though they were far from Idolatry, and worshipped God alone with all Simplicity, and were (for ought that appears) as virtuous in their Manners as ever; yet before our Saviour's Time, they were conquered by the *Romans*, and reduced into a *Province*, and so continued till their final Overthrow by *Vespasian*, and his brave Son: They could not therefore certainly depend on Victory for many hundred Years, by virtue of God's Promise made to them at first, although they continued to worship the Lord their God, and him only, and were observant of the Law of *Moses*. There is therefore the less Reason for *Christians* to expect the fulfilling of such Promises to them, which though made to the *Jews* at first, and forfeited by them, were not afterwards constantly and certainly either expected, or fulfilled to them. But, *Secondly*, Although we are not under the same Dispensation with the first *Jews*; yet we are under the Providence and Government of the same wise, and good, and powerful Being; we have the same Lord for our God that they had; we are equally in Covenant with him in our Saviour Christ, and for his Sake, much more beloved by him; and have the Hopes and Promises of Blessings infinitely greater in another World; and therefore have no Reason to complain, if God would only bless us with eternal Life and Happiness in Heaven, and leave us to make our Passage to it our selves as easy and commodious as we could, with Innocence and Virtue, without  
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engaging to bless us in particular upon any Terms and Conditions. But this he has not done; for *Godliness*, under Christianity also, *hath the Promises both of this Life, and that to come*; but then they are general, and fulfilled in what Kind, and what Manner, and at what Time it pleases God; which Determinations, though they make the Blessings look less certain, and more accidental, and less needful, than if we should obtain *what* we desired and wanted, *when* we thought fit; yet when we consider how wise and good He is, who is to give, we shall see it much better to leave it to God, than to chuse for our selves. We have therefore Leave, as Christians, by virtue of God's Promises in general, and of his Love to Man in Christ Jesus, to wish for, seek for, hope for, and expect, whatever temporal Blessings we truly stand in need of, that are proper for us in our Case, and fitting for God to give, as he is the wise and good Governor of all the World, and considered in the same Relation to other People, as to us; for even in favour of the *Jews* themselves, he could not do any thing unjust or unbecoming himself. To qualify us therefore for God's Favours and temporal Blessings, we must, *in the first Place*, stand in need of them; they must be truly necessary to us, according to our Apprehension; God does indeed oft-times bestow (such is his Goodness) more than we ask or think of; but we have neither Reason to ask nor to expect of God what is not truly needful for us, every Thing considered. *Secondly*, We must ask them of God; we must not ask for what we think not needful, but we must ask of God, although he knows it needful before; as well to acknowledge him the Lord and Giver of all Things, and our Dependance on him, as also because he requires this Service at our Hands. Not but that God does oft-times give us what we pray not for, because *He* sees it needful or convenient for us, though *we* do not; but that we have no Right or Reason to expect what we do not seek for at God's Hands, by humble Prayer and Petition. *Thirdly*, We must endeavour to deserve these Blessings at God's Hands; not strictly speaking, for that is never to be done; but so to qualify and fit our selves for the Blessings we stand in need of, as we are able by the Grace of God to do, *i. e.* by seriously repenting and amending of our past Sins; which, as they are the only Things that displease God, and provoke his Judgments, so is there no other Way to pacify his Wrath, and to prevent or put an End to them, but by Repentance and Amendment: And this seems very reasonable, that when we are asking Favours of God, we should be trying not to undeserve them at the least. And of this we are so sensible, that we know not how so much as to pray for any temporal Blessings, with any Hopes or tolerable Assurance of receiving them, till we have first resolved in our Hearts to reconcile our selves to Him, by promising Repentance, and becoming a new Creature. Some present Necessities are generally the Parents of these short-liv'd Resolutions; which, short-liv'd as they are, yet shew, that we know of no better Way to qualify us for God's Blessing, temporal as well as spiritual, than by repenting of our Sins past, engaging in Holy Purposes, and promising Amendment. *Fourthly*, When we have asked of God, what we apprehend truly needful, and have endeavoured to remove the only Impediments that stand in the Way of his Mercy, we must employ our whole Abilities, do all we can our selves to compass what we ask and want of God. We must be watchful, diligent, most careful and laborious, and use our Reason, and exercise all our Faculties in the best Manner that we can. We must act as if all depended on our selves, even when we know we can do nothing but with God's Assistance; for so it is, that the giving us Abilities, and blessing us in using them aright, is generally the Means by which he bestows his greatest Blessings on us; as he preserves us from falling into Pits and Snares, by giving us Eyes and Understanding to direct our Steps, as well as by a general Providence. Thus qualified, we have a Right, as Christians



and his Creatures, to ask of God whatever temporal Blessings we truly stand in need of, and to expect them from his Bounty and Goodness, and from his boundless Love to us in Christ Jesus.

Let us therefore see to the Application of these Rules, to our present Case.

We are called upon by publick Order to assemble in these Places, to ask of God Success in our Undertakings, and Prosperity to our Arms by Sea and Land, both for our selves, and those that join with us; and this we apprehend (in the *First Place*) to be both *just and necessary*, or otherwise we could not ask it of God. We may not ask him to succeed in any cruel or vain-glorious Enterprize. Ambition, Avarice and Injustice, are Things he hates, and therefore nothing of them must be in the Designs which we would have him bless. Our Armies are not gathered to invade an innocent and quiet Prince, nor to extend our Empire and Dominion; but to secure the Rights of injured People, and to prevent the Designs of an Ambition that hath for many Years troubled the whole World, and hath been hammering out the Chains that were to bind us in perpetual Servitude. It hath so pleased God, that those Designs should take Effect by Artifice, which open Force had not been able in Forty Years to bring about; and that he who hath hitherto always been the Aggressor, should now be the Defender of his ill acquired Possessions. The haughtiest People in the World have apparently sold themselves into the Hands of their greatest Enemies; and the Nations who have all this Time preserved them from this Mischief, with their Good-liking, are now endeavouring to redeem them, too much against their Will. Not, that if they could wear their Chains alone, they would not both deserve them, and become them well; but that the Mischief is, they cannot easily be miserable alone: The enslaving a Country is like the firing a House, the next to it always suffers much, if it be not equally destroyed; and if every Neighbour be not equally careful, it is not to much Purpose for one or two to be so. This indeed is the true and proper Justification of these sort of Wars, and of one Nation's intermeddling with the Affairs of another. Their Interests do so hang upon one another, and are so linked together, that it is oft-times impossible for one of them to be undone, or greatly mischieved by itself, without involving its Neighbour in great Misfortunes: Its Neighbour therefore has a Right (even that of Self-preservation) to take what Care it can to secure that one from Dangers, that in Time will reach itself; and if neither Warning nor Advice will prevent its destructive Courses, it may justly prevent them, if it can, by Force. So that Nations, how independent soever they are on one another, yet are not so with respect to *the Whole*, whose Interests are to be considered. If a Man, because he has purchased a Piece of Ground, and is the independent Owner of it, should therefore think himself at Liberty to let it run to naught, no Body would dispute his Power of doing himself that Mischief: But if he should pretend a Right to cut its Banks, and let in the Sea upon it, every one would perceive he was not so Master of his own, as by destroying it, to endanger another Man's; and they would see the Reasonableness of hindring that Man, by downright Force, from doing what was so like to be a general Mischief to the Neighbourhood, without denying him to be the Owner and true Proprietor of his Ground, if he were indeed so. Let a Man pretend to let the Wolf into his Flocks, because they are *his own*, and the Field *his own*, and see if the neighbouring Shepherds will not hinder him, if they can, from doing so mad and mischievous a Thing at first; or, if it be too late, will not combine against that Enemy and Destroyer, that is like to prove so bad a Neighbour. In these Cases, it is plain, that no Propriety or Dominion over our own, can justify our disposing of it to general Mischief, or to general Hazard. No Man is so Master of any Thing, as to hurt another by it, whom he should not hurt; the Bottom  
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of which is this, That no Man has a Right to do Evil ; and if he will assume such Power, others have Right to hinder the Exercise of it, because every Man has a Right to Self-defence, if he has not departed from it by Agreement. And the Reason of Things being the same in great Matters as in small, it is evident that Nations may prevent Dangers that are great and sure, though not immediately imminent, but at some Distance ; because it may be all too late, when the Evil is at the Door. And though the Occasions of War should certainly be as few and clear as possible, yet without these Allowances, there could be no such Thing as Peace, and Liberty, and Freedom of Commerce maintained in the World.

The Power of determining War, is not in the Subjects, but for good Reasons, placed in better Hands ; but nothing can hinder them from judging of its Reasonableness and Necessity ; nor is any Thing of better Use, than that they who fight Abroad, and they who pray at Home, and they who contribute to it, should all of them judge it reasonable and necessary ; and that is certainly the Case in Hand. We stay not to be swallowed up the last, for that our Situation would ; it may be, give us ; but we assist our Neighbours, that neither they nor we may be swallowed up at all. We would not become a pillaged Province under an Universal Monarchy ; but the Platform of that Edifice is already drawn out, and its Foundations deeply laid by the destructive Falshood, or the weak Submissions of a great People, and thereby our Neighbours are every way endangered ; and when they lose their Liberties, ours are in Jeopardy, and therefore we engage in their Assistance, as being next to them in Danger. In our last Wars, we fought for that which has been lost in Peace ; and we now fight for that which we believed depended on the Loss or Safety of that Country, and that is, the Liberty of these Parts of the World. What we have lost, may therefore teach us how to value what we have to lose. We therefore fight to save our selves *from* all that is evil and mischievous, and *for* all that is desirable in Human Life, the Preservation of our Country's Liberties, our Lives and our Religion ; Success in such a Cause, is what we apprehend most needful.

*Secondly*, We must ask it of God. *It is he that giveth Victory to Kings, and delivereth his Anointed from the Peril of the Sword.* This is to signify, that we acknowledge our Dependance on him, attribute all Power to him, and adore him in his Providence and Government of the World, in Opposition to those prophane Spirits who know no God, and think that all Things come by Chance, and are under the Direction of no intelligent Power ; but that Victory evermore inclines to the superior Strength, the better Discipline, and the most numerous Host : All which Particulars are overthrown by Observation of the contrary in Instances innumerable, and so unaccountably strange, that they demonstrate plainly an over-ruling Power, with a most wise Government. We must therefore ask Success of God ; and it is for that purpose, that we are here this Day assembled together in this Place before him.

*Thirdly*, We must not only ask of God, but we must also qualify our selves to receive this much desired and wanted Blessing of Success. Our Wants are indeed the first Motives of our applying to God ; but since we may come to want thro' our Faults, and for them may deserve to continue in those Wants, we must endeavour to deserve to have those Wants supplied. The Cause of Liberty and Religion is certainly the best that can be named ; but even this may justly miscarry in wicked Hands, that deserve not the one, and slight the other. *Popery* and *Protestantism* are now, in the Main, but different Names, to signify different Parties, different Interests, and different Opinions in Religion. One would think that different Opinions should produce different Practices, and that the Reformation of Manners should follow, upon Restitution of the Gospel to the Liberty of being known again, and



read, and understood by the People: But every one, I believe, observes, that good Principles are never so sure of their Consequences as bad ones. Popery is truly a very great Corruption of Religion as ever any was; and corrupt Practices may and do follow very plentifully from their corrupt Principles. The *Reformation* sets us right in our Notions, Principles, and Understanding of the Word of God, but very little else follows that should; our Practice is equally naught with theirs; so that we only incur the greater Condemnation, and whilst we have the Light, will walk in Darkness, and therefore stumble without Excuse or Pity. In Truth, the seeing how unedifying Lives the Reformed World live, and what ill use they make of their spiritual Advantages, has so cooled the Zeal of some, and hardened others in their old Errors, that there is now no Call after Reformation of Corruptions, no demanding the Cup in the Lord's Supper, nor any farther Desire of having the Scriptures in the vulgar Tongue, for the Use of the Common People; all which were heretofore the Demands of good, sincere, and understanding People in Popish Countries, themselves the while Papists: They think they see no good Effects of our Pretences to a purer Worship of God; we only change Sides, and live as we did before; and therefore they pursue these Requests no farther. And indeed, there is a strange Coldness and Indifference for Religion as *Reformed*, even in the Reformed Countries; both *High* and *Low* seem to set but little by it, and concern themselves no farther for it, than it turns to their particular Account and Interest. That Christian and becoming Zeal that heretofore flamed in the Hearts, and Tongues, and Lives of its Professors, seems to be quite extinguished; and all the Cries against the Popish Church, proceed rather from Custom and habitual Aversion, than from a true Sense of her Abominations, and a Zeal that is judicious, and founded on a right Understanding of those mighty Corruptions that overspread her Face: So that we seem not only to have denied the Consequences of our good Principles, but even to slight those very Principles, as they distinguish and denominate us *Protestants*.

These are but ill Preparatives for the Expectations of Blessing and Success, against a People who can hardly be more immoral than our selves, and who have indeed a worse Religion, but a truer Zeal for it. That we may therefore ask of God with any sort of Confidence, we must amend those evil Practices that are the Scandals of Religion, and the Impediments to God's Favour, and live as becomes the Professors of the Reformed Religion, in all Godliness and Honesty; adorning a good Profession with good Manners, and trying to speed a good Cause, with the Prayers of a good People; and that is also the purpose of our meeting here at this Time to humble our selves before God, to repent sincerely of our past Offences, to intreat for the Forgiveness of them, to promise all Amendment and Obedience for the Future, and to ask the Assistance of his Grace to put these good Resolves in Execution. God often does give good Success to the Designs of unreformed and unrepenting People; but that is what they can neither ask nor expect from Him: He has wise Purposes of his own to serve, that we know nothing of, and always acts with the greatest Reason; but that this should turn to our Advantage, we can never hope with Reason. When we intreat for Blessings out of Course, we ought either to ground our Prayers on general Promises, or to present our selves in such a State of Innocence, or true Repentance, as that there may be no Obstructions in the Way of God's Mercies. There is no coming to him with Hope of Favour and Acceptance, but coming qualified as he requires, and that is, coming truly humbled, and sincerely penitent.

When thus prepared and qualified to seek for Blessings at God's Hands, we must in the *Last Place*, take all the Care, use all the Diligence, and follow the Courses that Reason, Prudence, Observation, and Experience shall suggest, as fittest to attain the



the End we aim at. We ask of God the Preservation of our Life and Health, but we our selves must take all Care about our Meat and Drink, our Cloathing and our Exercise, which are the Means of its Preservation. We ask of God our daily Bread, but we our selves must plough, and sow, and cultivate the Ground, and take all other necessary Pains to reap the Fruits of it. We do not so much as mean, when we ask the Blessings we want, that God should give them us immediately from Heaven, without the Employment of those Faculties and Powers, both of Body and Mind, that he hath given us. We must therefore mean, that he would give them to our Industry and Care, our Diligence and Labour to attain them, and bless the righteous Means we use to succeed in righteous Undertakings. And thus in the Case before us, Horses and Chariots were found to be of great Use in War; and therefore the *Jews* would naturally and reasonably be afraid of wanting them themselves, and of seeing their Enemies abound with them; this was no Fault, nor was such Fear to be removed, but by particular Charge of God *Not to fear them*, which included a Promise of Assistance and Defence against them: Where therefore there is no such Promise or Engagement, that Fear is reasonable, and therefore Men are left to make such Provision as they find necessary. And so the Superiority of Number is truly an Advantage in War, and hardly to be surmounted; and a less Army will naturally be afraid of a greater, and Men do naturally, as our Saviour advises, consider whether they with Ten Thousand, can meet an Enemy with Twenty Thousand; and find it is impracticable. They must therefore, if they be wise, and act reasonably, increase their Numbers, or fall from their Pretensions, *i. e.* without a particular Promise of God, (which is not now his Method) they must make such Provisions of Things necessary, as Reason and Prudence shall suggest sufficient for their Purpose. We come to ask of God Success against our Enemies, and present him, we believe, a just and righteous Undertaking; but we ask him to bless *our Fleets and Armies*, the Instruments that are made Use of to obtain the Satisfaction and Security that is wanted. We ask him, that the Conduct of our Leaders, and the Courage of our Soldiers may answer the Justice of the Cause they take in Hand; and that our National Offences, and all our secret Sins, may be so overlooked, as not to provoke him to blast our righteous Enterprizes, and cause us to fall from the Hopes he has himself been pleased, by his former Blessings, to raise in us.

We ask him, moreover, (*Lastly*) to give us Peace and Unity at Home; and that the Hearts of all our People may amicably conspire in promoting the publick Welfare; that the Zeal of all Parties may spend itself in Reality, as it always does in Pretence, in doing the Nation Service; for all that does not tend to *that*, will quickly be found to be but Faction, Craft, and taking Vengeance; either the Insult and Retaliation of a domineering Party on the one Hand, or the Attempt of a disobliged or disappointed one on the other. This we ask, because we apprehend it to be absolutely necessary; but this we must not only ask of God, but endeavour to effect our selves. For though *it is God that maketh Men to be of one Mind in an House*; yet it is by means that he hath put within their Power, namely, by Consideration of the Usefulness, Convenience, and Necessity of such good Union and Agreement. We shall by our Divisions weaken our selves, and hurt each other; but we make both thereby an easier Prey to the Common Enemy: It is better for *Him*, we should destroy our selves by the Hands of one another, than by his Means and at his Costs. One Party (which you will) shall, with his good-liking, obtain the Pleasure of Revenge, such as it is, but he alone shall reap the Advantage of such Victories. It were better far, that he should do his Work himself by fair and open War, and if it must be so, by Wounds that we shall never be ashamed of. Concord at Home, and good Agreement, are always necessary to all Nations, and they cannot long sub-



sist without it. Our Saviour says it, and our Reason and our Experience say it also, and we believe them all; but something is too much for all; Men's private Passions carry it against their private and their publick Judgment; and their angry Resentments are (it seems) too much for all Authority, and all Arguments. In vain hath it pleased God to bless us with such a Centre of Union and Agreement, as through Misfortune or Mistake, the Nation seems not to have had for many, many Years; and such as all Parties (if I must not evermore except the *Popish* one) not only may, but seriously profess they do unanimously meet in, to love and Honour as they ought to love and honour; in vain, if *for Her sake*, they will come no nearer to each other.

If the *Place* be proper, the *Times* do not look as if they would make it unreasonable for me to conclude with praying again for Unity among our selves; and the laying aside all Fears and unreasonable Suspicions of each other, that Men would, each in his Sphere, attend alone to the Common Good, to strengthen their Friends Abroad, and to secure Tranquillity and Peace at Home. Without these Studies and Endeavours, all our Prayers to God will be but as so many idle Wishes; but when we do our Part, he never fails of doing his. Let us therefore, all of us (for no body is too great, no body is too little for their Duty) do what will become good *Protestants*, good *Englishmen*, and good *Subjects*; and leave the Issue, as we must, to God; beseeching him, of his Goodness, to hear what we have asked, and to grant us what he, in his Wisdom and Mercy, shall find is best, and most expedient for us.

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## S E R M O N

Preached before the Queen, at *Windsor*, June 17. 1705.

2 SAMUEL XII. *Part of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> VERSES.*

*And he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the Man that hath done this Thing shall surely die: And Nathan said to David, Thou art the Man.*

THESE Words are the Representation that *Nathan* made to *David*, by way of Parable, to convince him of his great Wickedness, in the Matter of *Uriah the Hittite*; and contain in them, *First*, The Judgment *David* passed against the rich Oppressor, *As the Lord liveth, the Man that hath done this Thing, shall surely die.* And, *Secondly*, The Application *Nathan* here made, *Thou art the Man.* But since the History and the Parable are so well known, and the Righteousness of the Judgment here passed, and the Fitness of the Application, so allowed of, and assented to by all; it will be, I believe, of less Benefit to speak to them, than it will be to see what *Uses* we may make of such a Judgment, and such an Application, in the Manner they were here passed. And, *First*, We may observe, that the readiest Way to pass a true Judgment upon any Occasion, is, to be one's self disinterested and unconcerned, and to remove the Cause to a Third Person. *David* here considered the Case of a rich Man taking by Violence from his poor Neighbour a Lamb, that was his single Treasure and Delight, to spare his own innumerable Flocks; and could not once imagine it was possible for him himself to have, at any Time of his whole Life, done the like: His generous Temper freed him from all Suspicion of such Avarice; nor had he ever entertained a Traveller at any poor Man's Cost, or grieved him in such manner; the Circumstances of his Life were never such, nor such at any Time his Disposition. And therefore he is very free to consider narrowly, how much Injustice, and how much Cruelty, were seen in this one single Act of Oppression; and viewing it in all its most unsightly Colours, as freely could condemn it. Keep but your Conscience clear, and your Understanding will generally be so too; our Passions and our Guilt corrupt our Judgment strangely; our Wishes and Desires cause us to argue strongly in their Favour; and our Aversion shews us every Thing amiss in such as are the Objects of it. The Reason why we refer our Causes to the Arbitrement of a Third Person, is not because he understands them better than our selves, (for that is not always so) nor that he loves Justice better, but because he is an unconcerned, indifferent Man, and has no Interest or Inclination to corrupt and bias him one way or other, but will judge according to Reason, and what appears.



appears. It is the same Case with our selves, when either Love or Hate, Hope or Fear, or any other Passion possesses us; we are too much prejudiced to judge exactly righteous Judgment; every Inclination or Aversion drives us from that Firmness and Steadiness of Mind which is requisite to the being impartial; every little slight Appearance is an Argument, when our Good-will is on its Side; and the most solid, weighty Reasons, are light as the Dust of the Balance, when urged against our Interest or our Humour: So that to be a fair and equal Arbitrator, we must divest our selves of all Concern and Interest. This was the Blindness of the Antients *Justice*; she was to see no Party, know no Person, but to hear Reason and Proof of Allegation, and to feel which Scale weighed heaviest, and determine for it.

It is certainly one of the hardest Things in the World to be indifferent, and to stand exactly poised; but yet to form a right Judgment, it is absolutely necessary; for just as much as the Mind inclines one without Reason and Proof, just so much Wrong we are inclined to do, and to determine without Truth.

Every Man and Woman looks well enough in their own Glass, but that is not the Way to judge of Beauty; we stand too near our selves, to see our selves exactly. In a Word, we love our selves too well, to censure hardly; and the Voice of Slander is the other Extrem; so that the common Judgment ofteneft hits the Truth, *i. e.* in judging of our publick Actions. This Unconcernedness it is, that occasions us to judge more hardly of the Sins of other Men, to which we are not liable by Disposition or Temptation, than of our own; not that we judge more hardly of other Peoples Sins than they deserve, but that we find our selves at Liberty, by our Innocence, to view them in their proper Colours, and to judge impartially of them, and condemn them as they ought to be condemned; whereas our own Guilt and Fear, or our Self-love, will not let us see our own Offences in so good a Light, nor suffer us to condemn them with such Rigour.

That we may therefore know our selves the better, and judge impartially of Offences, we may observe the prudent way of *Parables*, which the Spirit of God uses throughout the Scriptures, to bring Men to a Sense of their Condition, and an Acknowledgement of their Offence, by transferring the Cause to another Person, and shewing Men themselves in another's Image; which is a *Second Use* we may make of *Nathan's* treating *David* in this Manner.

Our Saviour, who was exceeding tender, where he could find the least Degree of Modesty, uses this Way of Parables most frequently, instructing and reproofing the *Jews* in the Person of a Stranger, (no Body could tell who, or where, or when) without any Mortification or Reproach; so that hearing, they might not hear, and seeing, they might not perceive; and yet be converted and healed, *i. e.* they might hear what he said in Parables, as said of other People, to whom the History related, and not as spoken to themselves; and yet might both consider what was said, and apply it to themselves, and reap the Benefit of it. The End our Saviour drove at, was not their Shame, but their Amendment; and therefore if they would but apprehend his Meaning, he would press no farther. Not but that he also made the other Uses of Parables to which they are fitted; as sometimes to convey his Sense in a Figure, which he could not think fit to do in plain Words, for many good Reasons; and at other Times, to do as *Nathan* here does, drive them to accuse and condemn themselves, in a Third Person, which they would not have done in their own. *When the Lord of the Vineyard cometh* (saith Christ, *Matth. xxi. 40.*) *what will he do to those Husbandmen*, who had beaten and stoned his Servants, and killed at last his Son? *They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked Men, &c.* Thus, by this Parable, he brought them to



to acknowledge the Justice of God in destroying the *Jewish* People, for their great Infidelity and Cruelty shewn to himself, the true Messiah, and the Son of God; a Thing they had hardly ever done, had he said the Thing in so many plain Words; because we can discern the Faults, and assign the Punishment of all the World, sooner than our own. Had *Nathan* come to *David*, and told him of a certain Prince in the World, who having Abundance of Wives and Concubines of his own, would not yet, in a Fit of Dissolution, satisfy those Inclinations where he might without Offence or Injury; but would needs send to one, who was his Neighbour and a Nobleman, to have his Wife, who had but one, and whom he loved most tenderly, and with whom he lived in the best Manner that could be; and accordingly debauched her from her Nuptial Bed, bereaving the Man of all the Joy and Satisfaction of his Life: Had *Nathan* addressed to *David* with this Story, the King had found out his Drift immediately; but the rude Application would have given him such Distaste, that though he might have been convinced of his Guilt, yet probably he would not so freely have confessed himself guilty. The Bluntness of Reproof does not well suit with the Modesty of human Nature; and downright coming upon a Man, puts him upon his Guard, into whose good-liking you might have insinuated your self, and gained your Point by artificial soft Approaches. They who will hear your Wisdom, and attend to your Reproofs, whilst you are speaking of another Man, if you assault themselves with Accusation, will avoid you with Contempt, or hear you with a sullen Silence; nay, when a Man is sure you come with purpose of reproving him, he will endure better through another's Side, and by the Way of Parable, than by immediate Application, though he himself will certainly apply it as intended. And People who design the Good and Benefit of those they would reprove, will be as careful as they can to do it in the most acceptable Manner; their chiefest Aim is to secure their End, and their next Point of Wisdom is to use such Methods as are easiest and most useful; and this especially should be observed in dealing with perverse Tempers, or with great Superiors. And this is the more remarkable in the Instance before us, because the Message came immediately from God, and was to be delivered without Regard to any Thing that might happen; he was to tell *David* how wicked a Man he was, and had committed the worst Adultery, and the worst Murther that could be, as they were circumstantiated and dressed, and that God was exceedingly displeased with him for it. This he must say, let *David* take it as he would; but yet he took the Liberty to prepare his way by Methods the most prudent, by introducing his Message, with this Parable which shewed the King the Injustice and the Cruelty he had been guilty of, and caused him to condemn himself, by condemning the like Offences in another Man, he knew not whom; and when he was, by this prejudging of himself, disposed to bear it, the Prophet then speaks out, *Thou art the Man*. The Prophet must discharge his Duty, and deliver his Message, if it come from God, let the Event be what it will; that he agrees to, when devoted to his Service, and knows his Recompence: But still it will be left to the Discretion of the Prophet, to pitch upon the Manner of doing it, and therein is his Wisdom to be exercised, by studying well the Men he has to deal withal. *John Baptist* openly rebukes the Prince, and tells him that he must not have his Brother *Philip's* Wife, and is a great Example of the Freedom that a Messenger of God may take, when gentler Courses fail him. *St. Paul*, the perfectest Model of a wise Ecclesiastick that is left us, will talk to *Felix* in Generals, and preach of Temperance and Righteousness, Virtues to which



that Governor was every way a Stranger, and leave him to make the Application himself; which he did, it seems, with Trembling and Disorder. Both of them did, I doubt not, what they found most proper, considering Time, and Place, and Person. And we want not other Instances in both the Testaments, of different Ways of managing different Persons, with more or less Reservedness. And therefore, great Discretion is to temper Zeal, to prevent its Excesses; and Zeal is to come in, and hinder our Discretion from degenerating into Fear and Cowardice, and being corrupted by our Interest or Self-love; for no Example can be an adequate sufficient Rule in all Cases, to all People. Our Saviour's frequent use of Parables, seems to bestow the Preference on the soft and gentle Way of treating with Mankind, and bringing them to Conviction by Reason; though he sometimes uses more Severity and Sharpness, according as the Case required. *Nathan* here takes the same Course, and with good Effect. *David* was again caught into a Condemnation of himself, and a Revocation of *Abalom* from Banishment, by a like Parable, by a wise Woman, suborned by *Joab* for that Purpose: She told him a mournful Story of her being a Widow, and having two Sons, the one of which was killed by the other, and the surviving one pursued to Death by her Relations, and by these Means her House and Name should be extinguished quite. The King takes Pity on her sad Condition, and promises no further Prosecution should be made for her Son's Blood; and then she shews how much it was his own Case, who had for ever banished *Abalom* for the Murder of his Brother *Amnon*; a Thing that could not now be remedied, nor bettered by another's suffering; upon which he took the like Pity on himself, hearkened to the Desires of all his People, and recalled his Banished. We can see that in another's Case, which our Concern will not let us see in our own, even when it is sometimes to our Advantage.

*Thirdly*, We may observe from hence the great Partiality and Blindness of Self-love, that will not let us see how heinous our own Offences are, nor suffer us to condemn them with the Rigour they deserve, when we do see them. If the cruel Oppression of this rich Man in the Parable deserved Death, in the Opinion of *David*, what would the Violation of the Marriage-bed deserve? And what the Murder of the Husband? But *David* knew of no such Man as yet; till *Nathan* took the Glass, and shewed him the Man that had done that Wickedness, and that (according to his own Judgment) deserved to die for it. When one would do *Justice*, one should remove the Cause to a Third Person, and be wholly unconcerned; but when we would shew *Mercy*, then let us bring it home, and put our selves in the Condition. But let us take King *David* at his Word, That *the Man that hath done this Thing shall surely die*, or deserves to die; and we may see how transcendently great the Mercies of God are to Men, above what Men can afford with Reason to one another. Violent Theft is worthy of Death, so is Adultery, and so is Murder; they are Offences that destroy the Peace and Happiness of Mankind, and overthrow Society and good Order; so that there is no living where they go unpunished, and therefore every one condemns them with all the Reason he has. Now all these Sins are no less heinous in the Sight of God, than they are mischievous to Men; and yet God pardons them upon Repentance. It is true, no Sin can give him any Disturbance, or do him any real Mischief; as neither can any Virtue make Accession or Increase of Happiness to him: But if Vice and Virtue are any Thing but Names, if Good and Evil are not Things that belong to this Life only, then must Sin displease him and offend him greatly; if there be another Life, and any Truth in



in the whole Body of Revelations, the Mercy of God is infinitely great in forgiving Sins to Men upon Repentance; and so great, that if Men should extend the like to one another, the World could not long subsist.

The Prophet having brought the Prince to condemn an Act of cruel Violence in another Man, and thereby prepared him to do as much for himself, if it were just, pulls off his Disguise, and discovers himself to him, tells him in plain Words, *Thou art the Man*, and gives him the History of his ill-contrived Adultery and Murther at length. The Parable referred to his Adultery only, because *That* was the principal Fact in Purpose and Design; and the Murther only followed, as it were by Accident; but now he charges him with both, the wicked Cause, and the more wicked Effect: *Thou art the Man* that didst debauch the Wife, and kill the Husband.

There are some Things relating to this Murther of *Uriah*, too considerable to be overlooked; and therefore let us see to them under this Head, *Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the Sword, and hast taken his Wife to be thy Wife, and hast slain him with the Sword of the Children of Ammon*. Here he is plainly charged with the Murther of *Uriah*, and said to have killed him, though he fell by the Sword of the Children of *Ammon*, at the Siege of *Rabbah*. The Reason is, because he sent to *Joab* to place *Uriah* in the Fore-front of the Battle, and then to order his Companions to retire from him, that the Enemy might the better fall upon him and kill him. Here is a plain Design of murdering him, and laid in the most likely manner to effect it. *David* had had the Guilt of Murther, had *Uriah* escaped by Valour or by Accident, because he intended the Thing, and pitched upon the surest Means of doing it. *Joab* the General was involved in this Murther also, because he was conscious of the King's Design, and had not the Honesty to put it by, or refuse to be the Instrument of such a Piece of Villany; and no Compliance with his Prince's Orders can excuse him: The most arbitrary Monarch on the Earth can have no Power to do Injustice; and he who has no Right to *Command*, can have no Right to *Obedience*. Had *Joab* been as brave as he was valiant, and good as he was cunning, he might have easily preserved *Uriah's* Life; for which the King in sober Humour, would have thanked and blessed him: But the least he should have done, had been to have refused the vile Employment; but chusing rather to comply with such unjust and murderous Commands, (though of his King) he was certainly involved in the Guilt of *Uriah's* Murther. As for the Men who retired from him in Battle, it is not certain whether they were let into the Knowledge of this Design, but might retire according to Orders, and that is most likely, considering the Numbers that must otherwise have been acquainted with this wicked Project: It is sure, that as many as designedly retired from him, when the Enemy pressed upon him, were designedly guilty of this Murther, and betrayed a brave Man to Death. It is a true Plague, this Wickedness! A Man infects all he converses with, and gives them Death, but dies himself also. *David* makes *Joab* guilty of *Uriah's* Death, and many other Officers and Soldiers; but is himself, after all that, the Man that kills *Uriah*. The Children of *Ammon* killed him fairly, though *David* killed him treacherously, by their Hand; the Scriptures say, that *David* killed him with the Sword of *Ammon*; but the Reproaches of the Prophet signify, that *Ammon* murdered him by *David's* wicked Order, by *Joab's* wicked Obedience, and by the base Desertion of his Fellow Soldiers. The Hand alone that killed this worthy Soldier, was entirely innocent and free from the Guilt

of



of Blood, killing him only as an Enemy ; and the Men that touched him not, were guilty of his Death ; that is the Force of wicked Purposes, pursued with wicked correspondent Orders. Men must not therefore think they avoid the Guilt of many Crimes, by avoiding the being concerned immediately in Person in committing them ; there is a murdering Men by other Peoples Swords than our own ; and a swearing People out of their Estates, by other Men's Perjuries ; and a doing Violence by other Peoples Hands, of which we may our selves be guilty, and for which we shall one Day answer, as well as our Instruments. A Man may contract Guilt, even by Intentions, Wishes, and Desires, although they never take Effect ; they are Matter of Command on God's Part, and of Obedience on ours, as far as it is in our Power to order or restrain them, and no farther ; but when we have expressed those Thoughts and Desires to other People, they are no longer ours alone, but will take Effect according to the Influence or Command we have over those to whom they are communicated ; and according to the Measure of that Power, shall we be guilty of the Mischiefs that follow. If one Man persuade another, his Equal, to a Piece of Wickedness, he will be guilty of that Wickedness himself, though it be not plain how far, nor in what Degree or Measure ; but if he Command, or use Authority with Arguments to his Son, or Servant, to commit the same Wickedness, he will be, in such Case, more guilty, proportionably to the Power and Influence a Father or a Master is presumed to have over a Son or Servant, which he uses to so bad purpose. If *David* the King, or *Joab* the General, command a Common Soldier to retire from *Uriah* in the Heat of Battle, and leave him to perish, they will be somewhat more guilty of *Uriah's* Death, than a common Officer would be, though counselling the same Thing ; because the Authority and Influence of the former was so much greater, and more like to take Effect ; and the Soldier is presumed to be more at Liberty to refuse his Compliance with such unjust and villainous Commands, when they come from one who is nearer to him, and whose Displeasure he dreads not so much, nor hopes so much from his Favour. Thus there are many ways of doing Mischief and committing Wickedness, besides the being actually and personally concerned in doing it ; and let the Means be what they will, we shall be answerable for them, as far as they are ours, and for the Force we give them by our Command or Threats, by Counsel and Persuasion, by our abetting, and Encouragement and Approbation ; nay, by our very Looks and Gestures, and sometimes our Silence. Whatever Way we take designedly to influence any one to what is Wicked, no doubt we shall be answerable for ; for this is our Ability and Power, and this we use to Mischief, and forbidden Purposes. Let the People therefore that are busied in this bad Work of setting others upon wicked Actions, consider this, That however Innocent they appear to the World, and unconcerned, however wary to avoid the Censure of the People, and the Punishment of the Laws, by keeping out of Sight, and at a Distance ; they are nevertheless guilty before God, according to the Power and Influence they have had over the Instruments of Wickedness that they employed ; and that it will avail them little at the Day of Judgment, to have kept their Tongues from Perjury, and their Hands from Blood, or other Violence, when their Hearts have been deeply concerned in willing and desiring, and contriving and resolving, and their Tongues employed in insinuating, persuading, threatening, or commanding Wickedness to other People.

This



This Use we may well make of this Circumstance of the Matter of *Uriah*; *David* is charged with killing him, although he perished by the Sword of *Ammon*: His Heart was in the Matter, he used his Authority with *Joab*, and he his with other People, and so the Man perished. The Fountain of this Wickedness was *David*; it was he that killed *Uriah*.

When *David* rose up from his Bed, and fell into the Snare that was not laid for him, but for which his Sloath and Fulness most unhappily disposed him, (and which ought to warn us all, the great ones most especially, of the great Dangers of luxurious Idleness) how little did he think of all these Consequences! *O turn away mine Eyes, lest they behold Vanity!* was a Prayer that should not then have been forgotten. That curious heated Gaze, will cost you all your Innocence and Virtue; you will debauch the Loyalty of the Wife, abuse the bravest Subject that you have, and murder him at last, and imbrue in his Blood the Hands of a great General; and it may be, of many other, innocent as yet, and honest Officers and Soldiers. Had these Things been foretold, they had scarcely been believed; but yet they came to pass, and not unnaturally or strangely: One Sin engages us in more, and when once we leave the right Way, we know not whither we shall wander. This is a Lesson that we ought for ever to remember; and could we see, as sure as we shall feel the Consequences of our Actions, we should be constantly upon our Guard; and we might see, as well as need to be, would we consider human Nature, and our selves, and observe how it has generally been with other People; for where the Passions of Men are at the Bottom, and the great moving Springs, we may reasonably expect the like Effects and Fruits in all Men, and in all Ages.

Another Use that we may make of *Nathan's* Application, may be, to use his Words our selves upon Occasion; to be in earnest, and to let our Consciences pronounce these Words distinctly to us, *Thou art the Man*, when there is Reason. A Prophet will not always be at Hand, to tell us when we have offended; but every one's own Heart will be to him a Prophet, and speak it plainly to him, if he will but hear it. We do not want a very faithful and exact Remembrancer within, of God's own Appointment, if we will give our selves but leave to meditate and recollect. And this indeed is the true Use we are to put our Memories to, when we read or hear the Word of God, or Books of human Composition and Authority, Religious or Historical, or hear Discourses in these Places. We may, by an honest Application, make good use of all we hear or read; find our selves often represented and described; often spoken to, exhorted and reprov'd, commanded, threatned, and encouraged, in the Person of other People; it is spoken in general; we our selves must bring it home; it is said of a certain I know not who; the Conscience is to say, *Thou art the Man*; our publick Labours else would be to little purpose. We do, and must direct our Discourses to the World of Hearers in general, and speak of Duties, and insist upon Commands and Prohibitions, and on most Points, in general; and dwell not on private Cases, or particular Occasions, of which we know little or nothing; it is the Part of every single Hearer, to make a faithful and exact Application of what belongs to him, himself: This Command is general, and obliges me; this Prohibition takes in me; this is a Duty I have long neglected, a Fault of which I have not yet repented, so as to forego it; this is a general Sin, in which I am involved; this Offence is laid to *David's* Charge, but yet my Conscience tells me too, *I am the Man*. The Man that has abused his Neighbour, and defiled his Bed, and thrown a spurious Issue into his Possessions; the Man that has deprived his Neigh-



bour of his Fame and Honour, by secret Lies and Slanders, sent abroad into the World by other Peoples Folly and Credulity ; deprived him of his Estate by Perjuries and forged Deeds, of People hired to it by my Contrivance and Suggestion, and Rewards. Some such way as this it is, that what we hear or read must operate ; it is thus that *Moses* and the *Prophets*, *Christ* and his Evangelists, Apostles, and other Ministers, though Dead, yet speak to us ; and thus we must avail our selves of their Instructions, Exhortations and Corrections ; our Hearts will never fail of reminding us what Applications will be proper, unless we corrupt them by wicked Principles, continual Pleasures, or Sottishness uninterrupted.

It was a strange Lethargy that *David* fell into for the Space of at least Ten Months ; and one can hardly tell how a Man so quick and tender as he was, could possibly continue so long unmolested. The Liberties of Princes and great Men in the *East* were always very great, and so continue to this Day ; and nothing puts so strong an Impediment in the Way of the Gospel, as that one Article of Women ; but yet Adultery was so positively forbidden and punished by *Moses's* Law, that *David*, an understanding Jew, could not excuse himself to himself by any such *Eastern* Indulgences : And as for the Murther, *David* knew better than all the World besides, that he was guilty of it ; the World concluded he fell in open Battle, by the Hand of a declared Enemy ; but *David* knew his own Intentions and his Orders. We are therefore at Liberty to think, that *David* was not, for Ten whole Months, perfectly ignorant and unconcerned, and without all troublesome Reflection on what had past ; but that he was, like People half asleep, alarmed with a sort of distant Noise, but not enough to waken them throughout ; he lay as it were in pleasing Slumbers, and was afraid of rising to a full Recollection of what he had done, and yet not quite able to shake it off. In the Ignorance we are in of what could give him full Security under the Burthen of such Sins, we may reasonably enough conclude he was not altogether undisturbed, though he was but now awakened thoroughly. It is no new Thing for People to live secure and unrepenting of great Sins, for as many Years as *David* did Months ; but their Conscience is not all that Time asleep, their Hearts do all that while their Office, and rebuke them often ; but they are neither heard, nor attended to as they should be ; and that, it is probable, was *David's* Case, till *Nathan* came from God, and brought him fully to his Senses.

But be that as it will ; let a Man but deal sincerely, and be true to himself, I think his Conscience will never fail of doing its Office, of giving him good Warning of offending, and of reproaching him with his Offences, and telling him, without Disguise, *He is the Man*. When I say, therefore, that a Man should use these Words of *Nathan*, and be a Prophet to himself, I mean that he should use no Shifts or wicked Arts, to stifle his Remembrance of his former Life ; but let his Conscience do its Part, in reflecting on what is past, and in applying faithfully what is heard or read, proper to his Condition ; and I make no doubt but he would often hear it say with *Nathan*, *thou art the Man*. And truly, unless a Man will do his Heart this Right, as to let it speak freely, rebuke, admonish, and remind, upon fit Occasions, without endeavouring to choak or silence it by vicious Habits, and a constant Succession of Business or Diversions, it will be hard for him ever to be again renewed to Repentance ; a Prophet is not ready always to make such seasonable Applications as a Man's own Conscience will, which travels always with him, nor presses Particulars so home ; and if there should be one, he might not, possibly, be heard ; for when a Man has hardened himself against the Reproaches that his own Heart makes him, and baffled it by frequent Slightings  
and



and Rejectings, it will naturally slacken, grow by degrees less sensible, and let the Man go on unchecked and uncontroulled, and then the Prophet never can be heard; and this is the natural way of hardening the Heart, till, in Time, it come to be wholly unaffected with what it reads or hears, and all Instruction, Exhortation, and Rebuke, is lost upon it; the fearfulest Condition a Man can fall into, and hardly to be avoided by any one who flights this faithful Monitor, which is placed by God in him, to guide him, and direct him.

These are some of the Uses we may make of this Transaction betwixt the Prophet and the King. And when so good a Man as *David* falls into such horrible Offences, the rest of the World had need be much upon their Guard. But this is no Encouragement to either good or bad People; they have nothing to imitate of this Example, but the Readiness of hearkning to the Voice of God, either speaking to their Hearts by secret good Suggestions, and Remembrances of their Offences, or to their Ears, by the Reproofs of his Holy Word, or by his Prophets warning them to Repentance and Amendment. And they who will do this, and with Sincerity and true Contrition humbly confess their Sins before God, resolve to leave them presently, and by his Grace, live in his Fear, and a careful Obedience for the future, shall hear the Word of God pronounced to their Ears by the Prophet *Nathan*, and confirmed to their Hearts by Faith in the Blood of Jesus Christ, *The Lord hath put away thy Sins, thou shalt not die.*

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## The PREFACE to the READER.

**W**HEN I had set down, in the First Chapter, the Reason and Occasion of writing this little Book; and, in the following Ones had given the Proofs of my Determination; and, in the Last, had shewn the Use and Application of them, I thought I had made an End of my Business.

But the Bookseller, it seems, is of the Opinion, that I should not shew myself Respectful enough to you, unless I introduced you, by the way of Preface. To comply, therefore, with his Desires, I must needs think of saying something, though it be but to discover some of the Imperfections of this Book.

The Chapters then, of Money, might have been much more compleat, by the Addition of five, or six Plates of the several Coins we have had, since the Conquest. Of the Golden Ones, I despair of ever seeing a Collection, of any tolerable Antiquity; since they who are best, as I hear, provided of these Treasures, can rise no higher than Ed. III. And for my own Part, I have never seen any one Piece, older than H. VI. and that was, I believe, a French one too: And I am confident, that to a common Curiosity, a Piece of Gold, older than the last Edward, will appear a very great Rarity. And yet, for full Five hundred Years since the Conquest, one may well imagine, that most of the great Payments must have been made in Gold; since (as I think, I have made appear) for three hundred Years after that Time, there were no other Silver Pieces coined, than Pence, Half-Pence, and Farthings: and for one hundred and fifty Years next after, there were no other than a Groat and Half-Groat. Henry VII. being the first that ever coined a Shilling, and that too at the latter end of his Reign, and but a very few of them: So that when you read (out of that Passage of Gervase of Tilbury, cited at large by \* Mr. Lowndes, and whom I have, by Mistake, in Page 399, cited as writing in the Time of H. I. instead of H. II.) *sub omnium Oculis effundit in Scaccario xxiii Solidos, quos de Acervo sumptos prius signaverit. And a little after, Reliquos verò xxiii Solidos mittit in Loculum.* When, I say, you read these Passages, and others like them, in ancient Writers of the English Affairs, you are not to conclude that there was then any such Piece as a Shilling coined, no more than you would conclude there was such a Coin as a Pound, though you often meet with the word *Libra*. Upon the whole Matter, till about 1544, the Silver Money of England consisted of Groats, Half-Groats, Pence, Half-Pence (called, of old, Mails) and Farthings: In any, or all, of which Pieces, it must have been very troublesome, to have paid five, or ten thousand Pounds: which makes it somewhat strange, that no more Gold of Ancient Kings should be preserved among us. But so, the Antiquaries tell us, it is with Grecian and with Roman Pieces, there being forty Medals preserved, for one Piece of Currant Coin, that we can be sure of. So that the best Reason, why we have so few old Gold Coins remaining with us, seems to be, because they were (as we call them) Currant, i. e. they might be easily spent.

But this that has been said, makes it appear, that a small Plate or two would hold the Coins of Silver, of five hundred Years. For the Coins of W. Conq. W. II. H. I. Stephen, H. II. R. I. John, H. III. Ed. I. Ed. II. were only Pence, Half-Pence, and Farthings. The Coins of Ed. III. R. II. H. IV. H. V. H. VI. Ed. IV. R. III. were only Groats, Half-Groats, Pence, Half-Pence, and Farthings. H. VII. (as is above-said) added to this Number, the Shilling, which is, I believe, hard to meet with. H. VIII. added no new Species, but, in his later Life, debased all the old ones. Ed. VI. debased them yet more, but in his last Year, made great amends, and added, Crowns, Half-Crowns, Six-Pences, and Three-Pences, (so that I have mistaken, Page 391. in saying Three-Pences were first coined by Q. Elizab.) As to the Coins of the Princes following, they have been in almost every Bodies Hands: But yet the Memory of their Weight, Fineness, and Compass, ought to be preserved to Posterity, much better than 'tis like to be. And we see the Necessity of the late new Coinage, hath almost obliterated



## The P R E F A C E to the R E A D E R.

*rated the Names of E. VI. 2. Mary, 2. Eliz. Jac. I. and C. I. already. So that an hundred Years hence, it will be hard to know, what sort of Money was coined by Them; which would be great Pity, since they coined excellent Money, both for Weight and Finess, which is both to the Advantage and Honour of a Nation. This Evil, I once thought to have remedied; but the Trouble of procuring, rather than the Charge of cutting a single Piece of each Prince, since the Conquest, was, I found, too great for such a One as I am: and whoever attempts it, must be obliged to abundance of curious Persons, who have these Coins in their private Cabinets. And I here bespeak their Favour, if I should ever have Time and Power to undertake it.*

*I have also, in the Second Chapter, omitted all Quarter-Pieces of Gold, of whatever Denomination, because they will be easily known, by knowing the whole: as also the 5 l. and the 2 l. Pieces of Gold of Ch. II. and the 3 l. Pieces of Ch. I. and some other such like, because they rather seem to have been Medals than Currant Coin.*

*As to the Chapter of Prices, it will be in every Body's Power, to make it more compleat, by reading the old Computus's, that he shall chance to light upon, and inserting what he finds wanting, or differing from the Accounts, that I have given: but most especially the Gentlemen of each University, will have it in their Hands, to make what Amendments they shall see good, out of their old Rolls, and Bursars Accounts; which I look upon as the most sure Guides, in Enquiries of this Nature, because our General Histories do mostly give us the Prices of Things, which are extraordinary, either for Cheapness, or for Dearness. Whereas the College-Accounts, deliver faithfully the ordinary and common Price of most Commodities, and Provisions.*

*One Thing more I must observe to you; That the Nature of the Work obliged me, I thought, to set down the Names of the Authors, out of which I collected the Materials of this Book; as well to justify my self, as that you may recur to the Originals, whenever you please, in the particular Years: as also to avert, a little, that Scorn, with which some, in their supercilious Gravity, may pursue the Collectors of such light and trivial Matters; when they shall find, that no English Historian, of any tolerable esteem among us, hath failed to make Observations of the like nature. Nay, some considerable Ones, have made it so much their Business, that they seldom conclude a Year without informing us, whether it were, a dear, or a cheap one.*

*This Remark will also help to remove the Ostentation of much Reading, because there is no need of reading an Author throughout, to find what I have here discovered; the Method of many of them, making it easier to do so, by setting down (as I said) the Price of Corn, and other Provisions, at the End of every Year. But so far I must needs ostentate my Reading, as to assure you, that I have viewed with my own Eyes, and transcribed from all the Originals, whatever I have set down; even many Particulars, which I have been content to give you very often, in honest Mr. Stow's English.*

*But, after all the Care I could take, I am sensible, there must needs be many Faults, and many Mistakes, in a Work of this Nature; and One I have already found, which I think my self obliged to retract, in this Place, because it is too late to do it in its proper One; and that is, a Censure I passed on Mr. Speed's giving us so many Two-Pences, and Three-Pences of Saxon Kings, and some others, since the Conquest. I was led into it, (as others have been) by thinking he intended to mark Two-Pences, and Three-Pences by the Figures of 2 and 3, which, I am now sensible, he intended for another Purpose. And therefore, as it would be an Error in any One, to think those Pieces were coined so early, so I must needs acquit Mr. Speed, either of being in that Error himself, or of leading any others into it by Design, altho' those Figures are placed over the Coins I there mentioned in Page 392. I have made some sort of Amends however, for these Errors, by taking more than usual Care, that you should have as few Errata's of the Printer, as is possible in a Work of this sort, and which you will find at the Beginning of the Book.*

C H R O N I C O N



# CHRONICON PRECIOSUM:

O R,

An ACCOUNT of ENGLISH Money,  
Corn, &c.

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## CHAP. I.

### *The C A S E.*

**T**H E Statutes of a certain College (to the Observation of which, every one is sworn, when admitted Fellow) vacating a Fellowship, if the Fellow has an Estate in *Land of Inheritance*, or a *perpetual Pension*, of *Five Pounds per Ann.* I desire you would be pleased, to give me your Answer to these following Questions; when I have first told you, that the College was founded between the Years 1440, and 1460.

- I. Whether He who is possessed of an Estate, of that, or greater Value, may make it over *in trust* to his Friend, and then safely swear to the Observation of such Statute, amongst the rest?
- II. Whether He who has not an Estate of that Value, when admitted Fellow, may keep his Fellowship though he *afterwards* come to an Estate of that, or much greater Value.
- III. Whether He who is actually possessed of an Estate, of *Six Pounds per Ann.* as Money, and Things go *now*, may safely take that Oath, upon presumption, that *Vl.* now, is not worth what *Vl.* was, when that Statute was made.

The Answer to your First Question, may be easily had, by your asking your self another, *viz.* Whether that Estate, though made over to another, be not still *yours*, as to the Profits of it, for the present, and as to the Disposal of it, for the future? If it be, How can you safely swear it is not yours, when you have it to all Intents and Purposes? A Man may have a legal Title to an Estate, and yet not be Possessor of it, nor receive any Fruits of it; he may be outed by Violence; it may be entirely mortgaged; or sequestered for payment of Debts; and during such Violence, Mortgage, or Sequestration, he may safely swear, he is worth but so much as he truly and indeed receives, and nothing more, let the Estate be never so great in it self. And such an Oath as yours has not Respect to the *Title* alone, but to the *Title* with the *Profits* of an Estate. And since the making over your Estate, does not (nor do you intend it should) defeat you of either, How can you save your Oath, by making over the Title of it, and that, it may be, only for the present? No Man but He who has a Mind to it, can be deceived by such Collusion. If an *Act of Parliament* should discharge all Debtors, who would swear they were not worth five Pounds, would you be-



lieve your Debtor an honest Man, who should take such an Oath, when you knew he had an Estate sufficient to discharge his Obligations to you, but had made it over to another, only to defeat his Creditors? Assure yourself, such making over your Estate, would not preserve you from the Guilt of Perjury, neither before God, nor good Men, though you would swear true *according to the Letter*. We lately heard of a Man, who, to save himself from paying a certain Summ, assessed by *Act of Parliament*, made over a great Treasure to his Neighbour (ignorant of the Matter) and locked him safely up in his Closet, till he came into the Court, and took his Oath he had not so much Money in the World; and then came back, set his Neighbour at Liberty, and took his Treasure again into his own Possession. All who heard it, said he was a *perjured Villain*, and though he had eluded the Law, yet he remained a Debtor to God's Justice, which would certainly find him out. This was the extremest Impudence that could be practised; but assure your self, all Collusions of this kind, are as great Prophanations of an Oath as his was. They who make over the Titles of an Estate, and yet reserve the Profits, are in the sight of God (as well as their own) as much Masters of those Estates, as if they had the *Titles* of them also in their Cabinets.

Your *Second* Question seems to require more Pains to answer it, than the First. But it only *seems so*, for there is in Truth, but little Difficulty in it, if you consider never so little, the plain and visible Intention of your Founder; which was, that no Body worth five Pounds *per Ann.* should be Fellow of his College: Why else should he require you, to declare, under an Oath, you would obey that Statute? It is manifest, that if you had an Estate above that determinate Value, you could not take that Oath; and, if you could not take that Oath, you could not be admitted Fellow. The having that Estate therefore, must of necessity hinder you, by the Founder's visible Intention, from being *admitted* Fellow; Will not the same Intention therefore hinder you from *continuing* Fellow? I do not, however, directly charge with Perjury, such Continuation, unless you deny, or do industriously conceal, your having such an Estate; because I am not sure you are obliged (by Virtue of your general Oath) to vacate, of your own accord, your Fellowship, but to submit to the Directions, or Injunctions of your lawful Superiours, and the Judges appointed in such Cases. But yet I think it such a Violation of that Statute, as I would not counsel you to venture on. And, it may be, another Case, not much removed from this, may better clear up this Question. Suppose it appeared to be the Purpose of your Founder, that no married Man should be Fellow of his College, and that before Admission, every one were required to swear he was not married; Might One be married *after* such an Oath, and continue Fellow, honestly, and with a good Conscience? I believe you will not think he might; but will rather conclude, that the Force of that Oath was, by the Founder intended to secure his main Purpose, of having none but single Men Fellows of that Society; and that that Circumstance which would have *prevented* his Admission, would also, at any time after, *exclude* him. Thus, I believe, you would determine in any other's Case, and without any Bias on your Mind; and yet such Oath does not, in Terms, directly take in future Time; but only says, *I am not married: I am not worth so much, &c.*

Your *Third* and last Question will cost me more Pains, and you more Patience, before we come to the Conclusion; if we can come to any satisfactory one at last. The Question would certainly need no Answer, if it were asked in gross, *Whether he who has VI Pounds per Ann. may safely swear he has not V?* When a Pound is, in both Places (and has been so for more than six hundred Years) XX s. but as you have qualified it, by distinguishing the Times, it will require both a good Casuist, and a pretty good Historian, to answer it absolutely, and to your Purpose; which is (as I take it)



to know, of what Value you may hold an Estate, with safety to your Conscience, which is charged with the Observation of that Statute, which vacates the Fellowship of One who has an Estate of Inheritance, or a perpetual Pension of C*s.* or V*l. per Ann.* A better Casuist, I own, you might have easily found. But, it may be, you could not so easily have found One, who hath in his Readings, made more Observation on the Price of Corn, and other Commodities, at different Times, than I have done, as you will perceive by reading this long Letter. So that, for ought I know, my Diligence may make you Amends for what want of Judgment may be found in me. And I do not say this in Vanity and Ostentation of my Labour, but because without a good share of Knowledge in these Matters, the best Casuist in the World can never answer your Question satisfactorily. And indeed, as the World now goes, the greatest (though I will not think the best) part of Readers, will be rather apt to despise, than to commend the Pains that are taken in making Collections of so mean Things, as the Price of Wheat, and Oats, of Poultry, and such like Provisions: Though, I hope, before I have done, to shew you, that the Observation of these little Things, may be of good use, in the Consideration of great Affairs. And when you shall find, that many a single Line, of this Letter, has cost me the looking over a great Book, you will rather think fit to commend my Industry, than to disparage so many good Authors, out of whom I have gathered these Materials: At least, you will think I wanted no Goodwill to do you Service, who have taken such Pains to satisfy your Question, that if any ancient *Greek* or *Latin* Writer had taken the like, and left us such Collection, you would have had the *Salmasius's*, the *Grævius's*, and the *Gronovii* almost out of their Wits for very Joy. But I am now come to your Question, and must premise, before I speak to it, that whereas you say your Statutes were made betwixt the Years 1440, and 1460. I must, to save Labour, call this Space, *the Reign of H. VI.* though his Reign began eighteen Years sooner.

I do affirm then, with the best Judgment I have, that I am seriously persuaded; that, although you are actually possessed of an Estate of VI Pounds *per Ann.* as Money and Things go now, you may safely take that Oath, upon Presumption that VI Pound *now*, is not worth what V*l.* was then, when the Statute was first made. Because whoever swears, swears to *Things* that are signified by Words, and not to *mere words*. When a Word signifies the same Thing *now* in effect, which it signified two hundred and sixty Years ago, then he who swears to *Words*, swears to the Things they signify; but when different Things are signified by the same Word, then he who knows that difference of Things, cannot help giving such Word, its proper and intended signification. A *Pound* (for instance) will buy either more, or less Corn (take it which way you will) *now*, than it would in *H. VI.* time. A *Pound* is therefore of more or less Value *now*, than it was *then*; and the *Value* of a *Pound* is truly a *Pound*, and not its mere *Name*. It is not therefore the same *Thing* now, that it was in *H. VI.* time.

I wish, I confess, with all my Heart, that all Oaths were so contrived and so worded, that they might be taken with the utmost plainness and simplicity; and that no Room or Occasion could be left for any mental Reservation, or Exception in the Mind: But I think it can never be; almost all Words are Equivocal: And it is impossible to fix a determined Sense, on the Denominations of Coin, when all Things purchasable with Money, are so changeable and uncertain. I do not mean, that a *Pound*, a *Mark*, and a *Shilling*, might not be always fixed, so as to signify XX*s.* XIII*s.* IV*d.* and XII*d.* but that it never can be so ordered, in this World, that a Man should always, two hundred Years ago, and now, and two hundred Years hence, purchase the same Quantity of Corn, the same Number of Chickens, and as many Yards of Cloth, at one Time as another, with a *Pound*, a *Mark*, or a *Shilling*. And if this cannot be,



then I maintain, that a *Pound*, a *Mark*, and a *Shilling*, is not now the same Thing with a *Pound*, a *Mark*, and a *Shilling*, two hundred Years ago. And therefore I may safely take my Oath, that, although I am worth VI *l.* as Money and Things go now, yet I am not worth V *l.* as Money and Things went two hundred and sixty Years ago, in the Days of *H. VI.* And if it be said, that I must needs take the Words of my Oath in their *Plain, Literal, and Grammatical Sense*; I answer, That so I must, wherever I can; but in this Case, the *Plain, Literal, and Grammatical Sense* of *Five Pounds*, is not the same, with what it was two hundred and sixty Years ago. What shall I do then? Shall I prefer the *Plain, Literal, and Grammatical Sense* of Words at this present, before the *Plain, Literal, and Grammatical Sense* of the same Words as it stood two hundred and sixty Years ago; which, I am sure, was the Sense of the Founder? I grant, that if it were a *Case in Law*, I should be determined by the Sense which the Words do bear at present; but as it is a *Case of Conscience*, I do roundly affirm, that V *Pound*, is not the same Thing, at present, that V *l.* was in the Reign of *H. VI.*

And that I may very honestly have Regard to the Value of V *l.* two hundred and sixty Years ago, will, I believe, appear evident from what I am going to say; That the Founder intended the same Ease, and Favour to Those who should live in his College two hundred and sixty Years after his Decease, as to Those who lived in his own Time. Now, they who lived in his Time, might, with V *Pounds*, purchase so much Bread, so much Drink, Meat, Cloth, Firing, Books, and other Necessaries, or Conveniencies: I know not exactly how much, nor is it material: I only say, the Founder intended I might keep such an Estate, as would suffice to procure the same Bread, Drink, Meat, Cloth, Books, &c. as the other might have procured for V *Pounds*, two hundred and sixty Years ago. But this I cannot possibly do with VI *Pounds*, as Things go now, nor it may be, with four Times as much. I may therefore have Regard (though in an Oath) to the Value of *Pounds* at that time; and, unless I have, I shall be in a much harder Condition, than he who lived so long ago; which is what the Founder neither did, nor could intend. This Argument in general seems, to me, unanswerable; and if you apply it to Particulars, you will see its Force more clearly. Use it, for Example, in the Business of *taking Degrees* in the *University*, to which you know you are obliged, and without which a Fellowship must needs be vacated. A *Degree* might be taken two hundred and sixty Years ago, at five times less Charge, than it can be at this Day; and if a Fellow must lose his Fellowship for want of a *Degree*, may it not very easily come to pass, that he shall not be able to pay for that *Degree*, if he may not be worth more than V *Pounds per Ann.* as Money goes now? Some *Founders* have, in Cases of extream Poverty, made Allowances, for indigent and virtuous Scholars, towards the taking their *Degrees*: but if you look into those Statutes, you will find that those Allowances are (as Money and *Degrees* go now) so very inconsiderable, that they signify little or nothing towards it, which yet in those early Days, would, (with a little help of Friends) have been sufficient to the intended Purpose. This is a clear Proof, that Regard both may and must be had, to the different Value of Money, at different Times; and that the Founder's visible Intention is better answered by such Regard, than it would be by a strict and obstinate Adherence to the bare Letter of the Statute.

This Inconvenience (you may possibly object) will follow, from departing from the present Value of a *Pound*, and having regard to what it was formerly; namely, That hereby too great a Liberty will be taken in Oaths of this Nature: Some will be apt to run the Matter too high, and (by reason of the uncertainty we are in, what Proportion a *Pound* at present bears to a *Pound* in *H. VI.* time) may pretend to keep their Fellowship, with an Estate of great Value. And to this I answer, That, for ought I know,



it will now and then happen, as you surmise; nor is there any one Rule that is not subject to Abuse. And therefore I do not presume to set out, with any Exactness, or Certainty, and much less to determine Positively, how great an Estate is, at present, equivalent to an Estate, of the same Denomination, two hundred and sixty Years ago. I leave that to Others, to gather from the particular Accounts of Things that I shall give them, from our Historians. And they who are concerned, ought seriously to consider, that although a *Pound* in *H. VI.* Time, might be worth four or five, or more, in our own Times, yet it was not worth twenty or thirty. And therefore the uncertainty of its Value cannot encourage any reasonable Man, to advance it to an extravagant height. They who are the Guardians of your College-Statutes, cannot (I believe) tell you exactly, how much *Land of Inheritance*, or how great a yearly *perpetual Pension*, will now-a-days answer to *V Pounds* in *H. VI.* Reign: but yet they can tell you that *60* or *70 l. per Ann.* will be too much to keep together with a Fellowship, if it be *Land of Inheritance*, or a *perpetual Pension*. And furthermore (which is an Answer to all Objections of this Kind, and a sufficient Restraint to all Exorbitance) these Guardians of your Statutes, have it in their Power (if it be fit to have it in their Will) to judge according to the *Letter*, and to determine that *V Pounds*, as Pounds do now go, shall be the limited Summ, which shall not be exceeded. For the *Letter* is the Judge's Rule, and the Sense he pleases to put upon that *Letter*, is that by which you are to be determined, without Appeal or Remedy, unless he says that *V l.* is any thing less than an *Cs.* And though I believe they never *will* determine, in any such Case, without regard to Equity, and Reason, and comparing of Times, yet if they *should*, you would be obliged to abide by their Judgment. And therefore all I have said, or can say on this Head, is only to shew you, what I think may be safely done with respect to Equity, and a good Conscience: Not to exempt you from the Jurisdiction of your lawful Superiours, but to shew you what you may do as an honest Man, though what you do, does not agree exactly with the *Letter* of the Statutes, to which you are obliged, nay (if you will) to shew you, what you may innocently do, even when you may be punished for so doing.

But since I have said, that great regard is to be had to the *Founder's Intention*, where, and as far as it appears; you may perhaps desire to know, from whence it comes to pass, that a Fellow is, without dispute, allowed to enjoy the *Interest* of Money, or the Profits of a *Lease* to a much greater Value, than that of *V Pounds per Ann.* when the Intention of the Founder seems to be plainly defeated by so doing? I answer you, That the *Intention of the Founder* does not seem plainly to be defeated, by holding a *Lease*, or by receiving the *Interest* of Money; because of the *uncertainty* of this Provision: Your Money may be lost by many Accidents; and if it should, then you are quite destitute and undone: And a *Lease* is generally for a Term of Years, which you may chance to outlive, and then you may be in as ill a Condition: But *Land of Inheritance*, and a *perpetual Pension*, are as certain a Provision, for Futurity, as the state of human Affairs will allow of. This, you see, makes a great difference. But moreover, I do not say, that you are to seek for the *Founder's Intention* any farther than it plainly appears in his Statutes; nor that you are obliged, in many Cases, to argue from a *Parity of Reason*. Money was put out to *Interest*, and *Leases* were made, in the time of *H. VI.* and your Founder, who lived in his Reign, knew this very well, and therefore had it in his Power, to have mentioned, and excepted *Interest* and *Leases*, in his Statutes, had he so pleased; and not having made any such Exceptions, you have no Reason to presume, that his Intention was to except them, but to enjoy the Liberty he leaves you at. Where Law-givers are at Liberty to oblige and bind their Subjects, and may use what Terms and Words they please, to signify such Obligation, their

Words



Words are presumed to include no more than they express : their Silence neither profits, nor hurts any one, it is their express Words that do both.

Supposing therefore, that you are convinced, that you may innocently swear to the Observation of the Statutes, and yet intend to keep your Fellowship, although you have an Estate of VI Pounds *per Ann.* upon Presumption that VI Pounds now-a-days, are not equal to V Pounds two hundred and sixty Years ago.

Supposing, I say, this ; I am now at Liberty to proceed to an Historical Account of Money, and of the different Price of Corn, and other Commodities ; that by understanding both, and comparing one with the other, you may be the better able, to determine what Proportion, a *Pound*, a *Mark*, a *Shilling*, or a *Penny*, now, bears to the same Denominations many Years ago. For this Account of Money, you will be obliged to *Fabian*, and to *Stow's Chronicle*, to Sir *H. Spelman*, and others, but especially to Mr. *Lowndes's Essay* ; I have only taken Leave and Pains to put Things into a Method which I thought better for my Purpose, and more for the Reader's Satisfaction, than any of theirs would be. And first, of the several Names that you will often find in reading over our Histories, both *Latin* and *English*. The *Gold* I have put *Alphabetically*, that Recourse may be had more easily to them ; the *Silver*, as better known, I speak of gradually, beginning at the highest, which is a *Pound*, and coming to a *Farthing*, which is the lowest *English* Coin we have ; and of which we have had none made of Silver (that I can find) since the 36 *H. VIII. i. e.* since 1542 ; and those were certainly very bad, since out of six Ounces of fine Silver, (together with six Ounces of Alloy) there were made two thousand three hundred and four Farthings, the Pound (as then most abusively called) going at 48 s. All the Denominations of Gold, were actually coined, at the Times I have set down (and not sooner, that we can find.) But for the Silver, most of them were mere Names, and were never coined ; which they were, I observe as I go along.

## C H A P. II.

*An Account of the Gold Coins.*

**A**ngels, were doubtless so called at first, from an *Angel* impressed on one Side of the Piece. And their Value was, at different Times :

		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Angels.	1 <i>H.</i> 6.	00	VI	VIII
	1 <i>H.</i> 8.	00	VII	VI
	34 <i>H.</i> 8.	00	VIII	00
	6 <i>E.</i> 6.	00	X	00
Half-Angels.	5 <i>E.</i> 4.	00	III	IV
	1 <i>H.</i> 8.	00	III	IX
	34 <i>H.</i> 8.	00	IV	00
	6 <i>E.</i> 6.	00	V	00

The Reader may perceive by this, that when he meets, in History, with the word *Angels*, *Half-Angels*, *Farthing-Angels*, or with any other Coin, he must observe what King's Reign he is in, to understand exactly what the Summ amounts to : for otherwise he will mistake. This I observe to him, once for all, and go on.



		l.	s.	d.
Angelets.	1 H. 6.	00	III	IV
	34 H. 8.	00	IV	00
	6 E. 6.	00	V	00

From hence it appears that *Angelets*, were the same with *Half-Angels*.

		l.	s.	d.
<b>Crowns</b> of the Double Rose.	1 H. 8.	00	V	00
<i>Britain Crowns.</i>	1 Jac. 1.	00	V	00
	9 Jac. 1.	00	V	VI
<i>Double Crowns.</i>	1 Jac. 1.	00	X	00
	9 Jac. 1.	00	XI	00
<i>Thistle Crowns.</i>	1 Jac. 1.	00	IV	00
	9 Jac. 1.	00	IV	IV ob. q.
<b>Florins.</b>	18 E. 3.	00	VI	00

They were so called, because first made by *Florentines*, as Mr. Camden says. *Fabian* says, that these were not of so fine Gold as his *Nobles*, and *Half-Nobles* were. But that which is more observable is, that he calls the *Floren*, a *Penny*, value vi s. viii d. The *Half-Floren* he calls a *Half-Penny*, value iii s. iv d. The *Quarter-Floren* he calls a *Farthing*, value i s. viii d. And these Words you will often meet with in old Histories and Accompts, applied to several Coins, as *Rials*, *Angels*: Where you are to understand, by *Denarius*, the whole; by *Obolus* the half; and by *Quadrans*, the fourth Part, or *Farthing*.

Thus, 1344, about this time, the *Noble*, *Obolus*, and *Farthing* of Gold, began to go about, saith H. Knyton.

		l.	s.	d.
<b>Forty Pence Pieces.</b>	1 H. 8.	00	III	IV
<b>Guineas.</b>	22 C. 2.	01	00	00
<i>Moton, 1358, a French Piece of Gold, at</i>		00	V	00

**Noble.** So called, because made of the noblest and purest Gold.

		l.	s.	d.
<i>Noble.</i>	18 E. 3.	00	VI	VIII
	5 E. 4.	00	X	00
	26 Eliz.	00	XV	00
<i>George Nobles.</i>	1 H. 8.	00	VI	00
<i>Double Nobles.</i>	26 Eliz.	00	X	00
<b>Rials, or Ropals.</b>	1 H. 6.	00	X	00
	1 H. 8.	00	XI	III
	2 Eliz.	00	XV	00
<i>Rose Rials.</i>	3 Jac. 1.	01	X	00
<i>Spur Rials.</i>		00	XV	00

There is, in Dr. Kenner's *Parochial Antiquities*, mention made of *Spurarium Aureum*; in Ann. 1292, or *Spur Royal*; but whether it were an *English* Coin or not, does not appear.

3<sup>d</sup> C

Scute,



		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
<i>Scute</i> , a <i>French</i> Coin of Gold,	1427.	00	III	IV	
<b>Sovereigns.</b>	1 <i>H.</i> 8.	01	II	VI	
	34 <i>H.</i> 8.	01	00	00	
	4 <i>E.</i> 6.	01	IV	00	
	6 <i>E.</i> 6.	01	X	00	<i>old Stand.</i>
	— — —	01	00	00	22 <i>Car. fine.</i> 2 <i>Car. Allay.</i>
	2 <i>Eliz.</i>	<i>the same in both Cases.</i>			
<b>Unites.</b>	1 <i>Jac.</i> 1.	01	00	00	
	10 <i>Jac.</i> 1.	01	II	00	

*Note*, In 9 *Jac.* 1. by a Proclamation, Gold was raised 2 *s.* per Pound. *Ch.* the First brought it again to the Standard of 1 *Jac.* 1.

The following Table is collected out of Mr. Lowndes's Accounts, which, though they differ in some Points from Mr. Stow's, who also cites *Records* for some of them, I cannot chuse but prefer, because of his Abilities and Opportunities of giving them most perfect. Premising first, that a Pound of Gold, *Troy-Weight*, was divided into twenty-four *Carats*; and each *Carat* into four *Grains*: And that the old Standard of *England* was, twenty-three *Carats*, three *Grains* and a half of fine Gold, and half a *Grain* of Allay, which might be Silver or Copper.

			<i>Fineness.</i>		<i>Allay.</i>	<i>Make in Silver.</i>			
<i>Years.</i>			<i>car.</i>	<i>gr.</i>	<i>ca.</i>	<i>gr.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
18	<i>E.</i>	3.	23	3½	½	½	15	00	00
			23	3½	½	½	13	03	04
20	<i>E.</i>	3.	23	3½	½	½	14	00	00
27, 30, 37,			23	3½	½	½	15	00	00
46	<i>E.</i>	3.							
18	<i>R.</i>	2.							
3	<i>H.</i>	4.							
9	<i>H.</i>	5.	23	3½	½	½	16	13	04
1	<i>H.</i>	6.	23	3½	½	½	22	10	00
4	<i>H.</i>	6.	23	3½	½	½	16	13	04
49*	<i>H.</i>	6.	23	3½	½	½	22	10	00
5	<i>E.</i>	4.	23	3½	½	½	22	10	00
8, 11, 16.			23	3½			22	10	00
22 of	<i>E.</i>	4.							
1	<i>R.</i>	3.							
9	<i>H.</i>	7.							
1	<i>H.</i>	8.	23	3½	½	½	27	00	00
<i>The same Year.</i>			22	00	4	0	25	02	06
34	<i>H.</i>	8.	23	00	1	0	28	16	00
36	<i>H.</i>	8.	22	00	2	0	30	00	00
37	<i>H.</i>	8.	20	00	4	0	30	00	00
1	<i>E.</i>	6.	20	00	4	0	30	00	00
3	<i>E.</i>	6.	22	00	2	0	34	00	00
4	<i>E.</i>	6.	23	3½	0	½	28	16	00
6	<i>E.</i>	6.	23	3½	0	½	36	00	00
6	<i>E.</i>	6.	22	00	2	0	33	00	00
1	<i>Mary</i>		23	3½	0	½	36	00	00
2	<i>Eliz.</i>		23	3½	0	½	36	00	00
2	<i>Eliz.</i>		22	00	2	0	33	00	00
19	<i>Eliz.</i>		23	3½	0	½	36	00	00
43	<i>Eliz.</i>		23	3½	0	½	36	10	00

\* It should  
be 39 *H.* 6.

*Fineness.*

*Fineness.*



		Fineness.		Allay.		Make in Silver.		
Years		car.	gr.	ca.	gr.	l.	s.	d.
43	Eliz.	22	00	2	0	33	10	00
1	Jac. 1.	22	00	2	0	37	10	00
3	Jac. 1.	23	3½	0	½	40	10	00
10	Jac. 1.	23	3½	0	½	44	00	00
10	Jac. 1.	22	00	2	0	40	18	04
2	Car. 1.	23	3½	0	½	44	10	00
2	Car. 1.	22	00	2	0	41	00	00
12	Car. 2.	22	00	2	0	44	10	00
1	Jac. 2.	22	00	2	0	44	10	00
	W. and Mary							
	Q. Anne.							

So that the same Pound of Gold which in 18 E. 3. 1344, was worth 13, or 14, or 15 Pounds in Silver, is risen, by degrees, to go for 44*l.* 10*s.* 00*d.* and the Gold not quite so fine neither. But if a Penny then, was worth our Three Pence, and XX*s.* worth our LX*s.* then Gold and Silver have kept, pretty near, the same Proportion to each other; for three times 15*l.* makes 45*l.* which is but X*s.* more than a Pound of Gold now goes at.

## C H A P. III.

*An Account of Silver Money.*

**A** Pound, *Libra*, contains twelve Ounces; and though now it signifies XX*s.* (when applied to *Money*) which is but the third Part of a Pound in *Weight*, yet it is because XX*s.* did heretofore weigh a full Pound, or twelve Ounces. Each of these Ounces contained so many *Solidi* or Shillings, and so many *Denarii* or Pence, as they who governed the Money-Matters thought fit; sometimes more, and sometimes fewer. Dr. *Hicks*, in his most learned, useful, and laborious Work (much to his own, and to the Nation's Honour) tells us, *pag.* 111. *Dissert. Epistol.* that the Saxon Pound contained LX Shillings. For this, he cites a Passage out of the *Textus Roffensis*; *Ceorles Wergylde is Myrcnalage CC Scill. Thegenes Wergylde is fix swa micel; that byth XII hundred Sill. Thonne bið Cyninges anfeald Wergylde, fix Thgena Wergylde, be Myrcnalage; that is XXX þusend Sceata; that bið ealles CXX Punda.* The English of which is, A Charles Wergylde is, by Mercian-Law, 200 Shillings. A Thaines Wergylde is six times as much, *i. e.* 1200*s.* And the King's single Wergylde is as much as the Wergylde of six Thains; that is 30000 Sceata. Which is in all 120 Pounds.

The very same Words we find at the End of King *Æthelstane's* Laws, put out by Mr. *Lambard*; and afterwards by Mr. *Whelock* at Cambridge, 1644. *pag.* 56. excepting that it is said here, that a *Ceorles Wergylde* is 266 *Thrimse*, which make 200*s.* and then goes on, as above; now if a Charles Wergylde be 200*s.* and a Thaines 1200*s.* and a King's six times as much, *i. e.* 7200*s.* and this last Summ make but CXX*l.* it will follow, that there must go LX*s.* to the Pound, because 120 multiplied by 60, produces 7200*s.* But if, as it is here said, 266 *Thrimse* make 200*s.* and (as is said in the same place, *pag.* 55.) that a King's Wergylde is among the English 30000 *Thrimse*: then there will be found in 30000 *Thrimse*, just 22400*s.* and 208 *Thrimse* remaining, which will make above 373*l.* though you should allow 60*s.* to the Pound; which is near to three times the Sum it ought to be. And if *Thrimsa* be (as that learned Person concludes) 4*d.* of Saxon Money, then 30000 *Thrimse* will make 400*l.* allowing 60*s.*



to each Pound, which is more than three times 120 *l.* so that nothing can be done with *Thrimſa*, if 266 of them make 200 *s.* Now if we will allow but of a Mistake (not great in it self) of CXX for CL, all things will go well, and the Saxon Pound will continue, as it has all along been counted, to be made up of 48 *s.* for 150 multiplied by 48, makes just 7200 *s.* which is the King's *Weregild*. There is also Reason to believe, that in King *Cnut's* Time (who reigned from 1017, to 1035,) the Saxon Pound continued at 48 *s.* because in his third Law, it is said that he who breaks the King's Peace in a *Head Church*, is to forfeit V *l.* If in a *Second Rate Church*, 120 *s.* If in a *less Church*, (but where there is a Church-Yard or Burying-Place) 60 *s.* If in a *Country Church* (*Feld Cyric*) where there is no Church-Yard, 30 *s.* Here you see there is a gradual Diminution of the Mulet, V *l.* 120, 60, 30 *s.* from whence I conclude that V *l.* was just double to 120 *s.* that is, it was 240 *s.* which will make V *l.* at 48 *s.* the Pound; and it will not be double to 120 *s.* by any other Reckoning. To this, let me add, that Mr. *Cambden*, Sir *H. Spelman*, in his *Glossary*, and Mr. *Lambard* in his, do all of them agree, that the Saxon Pound was made up of 48 *s.* and give no Intimation that it was ever otherwise, either more or less. I do not pretend, however, that Dr. *Hicks* has not other Authorities, besides what is above cited, for what he affirms; for he is so well skilled in these Matters, and has taken so much Pains in them, that he is not likely to say a Thing that seems so new, without good Reason. Let it then be said, that a Saxon Pound, did sometimes contain LX *s.* but generally 48 *s.* and each Shilling contained 5 *d.* so that a Pound, or *Libra Anglo-Saxonica*, contained 240 *d.* How long it continued thus, I cannot tell exactly, but in the Laws, which are called King *Edward's*, 31. it is said, In *Danelega*, the Forfeiture for Breach of Peace, was VIII *l.* which was raised by the *Hundred*. Of this VIII *l.* the King received 100 *s.* the Sheriff 50 *s.* and the Bishops *Decanus* (in whose Deanry the Peace was broken) the other 10 *s.* From whence it is clear, that VIII *l.* contained 160 *s.* which is 20 *s.* per Pound. But because it is manifest, from the third Law, that this Collection of *Edward's* Laws was made after *W. Rufus's* Time (since there is mention made of him, by Name, in it) it will be better to say, that the Pound contained XX *s.* in *William the Conqueror's* Time; because in the IV<sup>th</sup> of his Laws, *In Lege Danorum, foris factura est VIII lib. XX Solidi pro Capite, & VII libra Regi*. In *Danelagh*, the Forfeiture is 8 *l.* 20 *s.* for the Head, and 7 *l.* for the King. And in 79 of *H. 1.* *Infractio Pacis Regis V lib. in Anglorum Lege. Media L. s. & adhuc minoris, ubi parva Parochia est, & Atrium cum sit XXV s. & Campestris Capellæ, ubi non sit Atrium, XII s. VI d.* which is King *Cnut's* Law (above-recited), turned into *Latin*, and the Rates reduced to the Money then current: which confirms my Conjecture, that V *l.* was, there, double to 120 *s.* because it is here double to 50 *s.* And whoever looks into the Laws of King *Ina*, *Alfred*, and others, and finds the same Proportions of 120, 60, and 30 *s.* so oft observed in the Fines or Forfeitures of Offenders, will be apt to conclude that the Pound was then 48 *s.*

There is also some dispute, whether the Pound was made up of twelve; or of fifteen Ounces. In the 30<sup>th</sup> of King *Ethelred's* Laws (as they are in *J. Brompton*) you will find these Words; *Let those who overlook the Ports, see, that every Weight at the Market, be the Weight by which my Money is received, and let each of them be marked, so that 15 Ora make a Pound*. And in Sir *H. Spelman's* *Glossary*, you will find that *Ora* signifies *Uncia*, and so in other learned Authors. But the same most learned Knight tells us, that *Ora* was also a Piece of Money, valued 16 *d.* for which he cites this Passage. *Plac. coram Rege T. Mich. 37 H. 3. Rot. 4. The Men of Berkeholt, Com. Suffol. say, that in the time of King Henry, the Grand-Father of our present Lord the King, they had a Custom, that when they would marry out their Daughters, they were wont to pay, for Leave so to do, 2 Ora, which are valued at 32 d.* Now 15 *Ora* make just a Saxon Pound,



Pound, 48 s. or fifteen times 16 *Oræ* make 240 d. There is therefore no need of saying that *Ora* signifies an Ounce in King *Ethelred's* Law, nor in the same Law renewed by King *Cnute*, (but which ought to be corrected by the Law of *Ethelred*, for instead of *ad Mercatum*, it is corruptly written *admetatum*.) Mr. *Somner* indeed (to whose Judgment great regard is to be had in all these Matters) is of the Opinion; that there was never any such Piece of Money as an *Ora*, but that it always signifies an Ounce, of which he says there were two sorts, the one containing 16 *Denarii*, the other 20, (of which there is so frequent mention made in the *Dooms-day-Book*) which was called the greater Ounce. But then he agrees that there were but twelve Ounces in the Pound, which can hardly be reconciled with *Ethelred's* Law. For if 15 *Oræ* are to make a Pound, and *Ora* be an Ounce, there will unavoidably be fifteen Ounces in the Pound. And besides, he afterwards observes (from Mr. *Cambden*, out of *Registr. Burton*) that 20 *Oræ* are said to be of equal value with 2 Marks of Silver. Now a Mark is 8 Ounces, (when XX s. make a Pound in weight) and 2 Marks are 16 Ounces (which he values at XXVI s. VIII d.) and if 20 *Oræ* be 20 Ounces (as they must, if *Ora* be necessarily an Ounce) then 20 Ounces are of equal value with 16 Ounces; which may be true of the Pence that are made of an Ounce, but can hardly be true of the Name or Denomination of an Ounce. 12 Ounces, indeed, of 20 d. are equal to 15 Ounces of 16 d. But he who says that 12 Ounces are equal to 15 Ounces, must understand something which his words do neither express nor imply. It will never therefore be true, that *Ora* should always signify an Ounce; that there should be 15 *Oræ* in a Pound, and yet that there should be but 12 Ounces in the Pound. Whenever therefore it is said, that there are 12 *Oræ* in a Pound, there *Ora* is 20 d. Whenever there are 15 *Oræ* in a Pound, then *Ora* is 16 d. *Verelius* in his *Lexicon Scandicum*, says, *Ore, Solidus, & tertia pars Solidi*. And *Dolmerus* (as he is cited by *Du Fresne*) says, *Ora, vernacule Aura, Danis Ore, fuit olim genus monetæ, valens 15 Minuta*. Which would make one think it a Denomination of Money, rather than of Weight.

It was a good Law of King *Edgar*, that there should be the same Money, the same Weight, and the same Measures, throughout the Kingdom: but it was never well observed. What can be more vexatious and unprofitable, both to Men of Reading and of Practice; than to find, that when they go out of one County into another, they must learn a new Language, or cannot buy or sell any thing? An *Acre* is not an *Acre*; nor a *Busbel* a *Busbel*, if you travel but ten Miles. A *Pound* is not a *Pound*, if you go from a *Goldsmith* to a *Grôcer*; nor a *Gallon* a *Gallon*, if you go from the *Ale-house* to the *Tavern*. What Purpose does this Variety serve, or what Necessity is there, which the Difference of Price would not better answer and supply? It is impossible to fix the Price of an *Acre* of Land, or of a *Quarter* of Wheat, because Land is much better in one County than another, and because the Price of Corn will depend upon the Plenty or the Scarcity of it, and that upon the Goodness or the Badness of the Soil and Seasons. But it is possible to determine how many Feet, or Yards, length and breadth, an *Acre* shall contain, in all Places alike; and possible to determine how many Quarts a *Busbel*, and how many *Busbel* a *Quarter* shall contain, so that every Body shall know these Things alike, and neither be mistaken nor imposed upon. These things, I know, have (some of them) been determined by Laws; but Custom and Folly have made those Laws useless. And the Trouble that such Variety hath often given to me, as well as others, will justify this Digression. From which I now return to speak of *Libra Anglo-Normanica*; which contained XX s. and each Shilling contained, sometimes 16 d. but generally 20 d. made out of an Ounce. The *Libra Denariorum*, and the *Libra Sterlingorum* are the same; their Ounce containing 20 d. and in that they agree with the *Saxon* Pound, though they differ in the Number of Shillings. *M. Du Fresne* (not to be named without Honour) in *Libra Gallica*, says; a Penny is the 20<sup>th</sup> Part of an Ounce;



Ounce; and that 12 *d.* make a Shilling, and 3 Ounces make 5 *s.* it is therefore the same with *Libra Anglo-Normanica*. You will see hereafter in the *Table*, how the Pound differed, by being divided into more or fewer Shillings. I need not observe to you, I think, that there was never any coined Piece of Silver, that either weighed, or was called a *Pound*.

The next Denomination of Money, you will often meet with, is a *Mark*, which the Saxons call *Mancus*, *Mancusa*, *Mearc*, &c. and amongst them it came to XXX *d.* which was, of their Money, VI *s.* Thus in the Laws of *H. 1. c. 35.* it is said, *XX Manca quæ faciunt Solidos L.* Now you will wonder that twenty times 6 *s.* (*i. e.* 120 *s.*) should make but 50 *s.* unless you remember that the 120 are *Anglo-Saxonic* Shillings, and the 50 are *Anglo-Norman* ones, and that each of them contain alike 600 Pence. Thus *C 69. Debent reddi, secundum Legem, XXX s. ad manbotam; idem hodie quinque Marca.* Here both the XXX *s.* and the *quinque Marca* are *Saxonic*. for there are 5 times 6 in 30. And so again, *De Twelfbindo, i. e. Thaino, 120 s. qui faciunt 20 Marcas.* In *c. 34. Erga Hundredum XXX s. & V Denar. qui faciunt V Marcas, ut Solidus den. XII. computetur.* Which brings the Mark to VI *s. 1 d.* In the 76 *c.* a Mark is but 4 *s. 6 d.* but I doubt not but it is a mistake; and, indeed, those Laws, as we have them now, are full of mistakes: It is great pity Mr. Somner's Corrections, Annotations, and Glossary upon them, are not published, but lie obscurely in a private Library: the Labours of so faithful and judicious an Antiquary are well worth the Cost that any noble Lover of this sort of Learning would be at in making them Publick, and would pay him with ample Praise and Honour. When a Mark came to be valued at XIII *s. III d.* I cannot tell with any exactness, but *M. Paris* in the Life of *Guarinus Abb. of St. Albans*, in *Ann. 1194*, and in 1235, tells us that a Mark was then (1194) 13 *s. 4 d.* and so it has continued to this Day, without any variation: how long before that, appears not. I must also observe here, that there never was any such Piece of Silver as a Mark coined; and I cannot find any mention made of any such Piece of Gold, since the *Norman Conquest*; though probably there was, before, among the Saxons, with some Mark or Signature upon it, for the *English* word to mark, does probably come from it; or that from the Verb.

**Angel.** There was never any such Piece of Silver coined; but because the Golden Piece of that Name, was valued at X *s.* therefore X *s.* is called an *Angel*. And so it is with the word

**Noble.** Which goes for VI *s. VIII d.* in Accounts: but there has not been any such Piece of Gold coined, at that Price, since the 9 *H. 5.* and when they were first coined by *E. 3. 1344*, they seem not to have been very acceptable to the Nation, for thus *H. Knyton*, p. 2484. represents the Matter. *About this time the Noble, Obolus, and Farthing of Gold, began to go about, in the Kingdom; upon which, the Parliament ordained, that none of the Commons should be compelled in any Payments, to take above XX s. of this new Money.* This was not, because the Gold was not good (for it was very fine, and of the Old Standard) but because (as I imagine) poor People could not get it easily changed into Silver, and so would be distressed; for at this time there were no Silver Coins, but Pence, and Half-pence, and *q s.* it being at the soonest, five Years before there were any Groats or Half-Groats coined: which was about 1349. I shall lose half a dozen Lines of my *Common-Place-Book*, if I may not, under this Head, tell you, that in *Ann. 1389*, there were seven Coiners condemned and hanged, for bringing a Noble (not to nine Pence, but) to X *s.* making thence six Quadrantes, or Farthings. A Noble of right contained 80 *d.* the Obolus, or Half contained 40 *d.* and the Quadrans or Farthing contained 20 *d.* But by these false Coiners, a Noble was brought to 120 *d.* the Ob. to 60 *d.* and the Qu. to 30 *d.* so that there were two Quadrantes, above the four good ones; which was their Profit. *Ed. 4.* raised the Noble from VI *s. VIII d.* to X *s.*

which,



which, though it was good Gold, and called by another Name (a *Rial*) yet was not well accepted, but thought to be to the Prejudice of the Commonwealth; but for what Reason I know not.

**A Crown.** The first *Silver* Coin of the value of *V s.* (that I can observe) was in *Ed. VI.* Days; the Name is old, but then it was always Gold.

**Half-Crowns.** Of the same Date with *Crowns*, and never before.

**Shilling, Solidus.** The *Latin* word is of most uncertain signification, and to be determined by every particular Nation: but the word *Scyilling* or *Shilling*, never signified in *England*, but *5 d.* with the *Saxons*, and *12 d.* ever since: when it went for *12 d.* at first, is hard to say. But, as common as this word is, in all Books, and all Accounts, yet there was never (that appears) any Piece of Silver of that Denomination coined in *England* till the Year 1504, when *Fabian* says, *A new Coin of Silver Groats, and Half-Groats, and Shillings with half-faces, was made.* *Stow* says, in the same Year, *A new Coin was by Parliament appointed, i. e. Groat and Half-Groat, which bare but half-faces. The same time also was coined a Groat, which was in value 12 d. but of these but a few were coined.* He does not call them *Shillings*, but *Fabian* does, and he lived at that very time, and was an observing Citizen. However, the Name does not appear, in *Mr. Lowndes's* Accounts, till a great while after. But *Stow* says, *6 E. 6. there were coined, a Piece of Silver of V s. a 2d. Piece of II s. VI d. a 3d. Piece of a Shilling; a 4th VI d. and of smaller Money, a Penny of the Double Rose, not Sterling but base; a Half-Penny of the Single Rose; and a Farthing with a Portclove.* Also in *34 H. 8.* there were coined *Testons* of *12 d.* but not called *Shillings*, *13 d. ob. 9 d.* and *4 d. ob.* were all Pieces that came from *Scotland* in the Reign of *Jac. I.* (though some of them were coined in *England*) and therefore I meddle not with them.

**Testons.** Or, as we commonly call them, *Testors*, from a *Head* that was upon them, were coined (as is before said) *34 H. 8.* *Sir H. Spelman* says, they are a *French* Coin, of the value of *18 d.* and he does not know, but they might have gone for as much in *England*. He says it was *Brass*, and covered over with *Silver*, and went in *H. 8.* Days for *12 d.* but *1 Ed. 6.* it was brought down to *9 d.* and then to *6 d.* (which still retains the Name) and in *Ann. 1559* to *4 d. ob.* *Stow* says there was a second sort of *Testons*, which in 1559 was cried down to *2 d. q.* And a third sort that was made unpassable at any Rate. It is certain there were very good ones coined in *E. 6.* Time; and they have still continued under all Princes, under the same Name, and are the usefullest Pieces we have.

**Groats.** See of them, under a *Penny*. *Grossus* signifies great; and a *Groat* was a great Piece with respect to a *Penny*, which was but a 4<sup>th</sup> Part, and the greatest Piece (in all likelihood) then coined.

**Three-Pence.** No mention made of them, till 1561, when *Queen Elizabeth* coined them, with *6 d. 4 d. 2 d. 1 d. 1 ob. and ob. q.* Pieces, and called in all the base Money in the Kingdom; and set our Coin upon that noble Foot on which it now stands; which, because it was of the greatest Benefit to the Nation, is one of the greatest Glories of her Reign; for those are the truest and most lasting Honours, that are built upon the Publick Good, procured or preserved by Princes.

**Penny, Denarius,** was the first coined Piece of Silver we have notice of, and, for many Years the only one; in *H. 1.* Days it is certain there were *Half-Pence*; and *9 Ed. 3. cap. 3.* it is enacted, That no *Sterling* (i. e. *Penny*) *Half-Penny*, nor *Farthing*, should be melted down by the Goldsmiths; which is a good Proof, that there were, at that time (which was *Ann. 1335*) no other Pieces of Silver coined. And *4 H. 4.* it was enacted, That one *Third* of the Silver coined, should be coined into *Half-Pence*, and *Farthings*. A *Penny* was indeed so much the Whole of the current Coin



Coin of the Kingdom, that *Denarius* was the same thing with *Nummus*, or Money: And therefore *Simeon Dunelm.* 1126, says, the Men that were found to have made false Money, i. e. *Denarii* not of pure Silver, were hanged. And (when it is any determined Summ that is spoken of) *Nummus* does generally signifie a Penny, So *M. Westm. Ann.* 1095, says, that though there were more than 300000 Men marching to the *Holy Land*, yet Provision was so plentiful, that a *Ram* was sold at a Penny (*uno Nummo*) and an *Ox* at (12 *Nummis*) 12 d. *Dr. Hicks* (in his *Dissertatio Epistolaris*, p. 109.) says, that the *Anglo-Saxons* had but one Silver Coin among them, and that was a Penny. So says *Mr. Cambden*, *Sir H. Spelman*, and most of our good Antiquaries. And therefore when we find the honest and industrious *Mr. Speed*, in his *Chronicle*, gives us the *Three-Pences* of so many *Saxon Kings*, from *Cheuline* and *Egbert*, *Ann.* 562, down to *Ed. the Confessor*, the *Two-Pence* of *Harold*; and again, the *Three-Pences* of *W. Con. W. 2. H. 1. Stephen, H. 2. John, H. 3.* and a *Two-Pence* of *R. 1.* and that from the Treasury of that noble Antiquary *Sir R. Cotton*; we crave leave (for many Reasons) to think him mistaken; since in our Histories we find no mention of any such Pieces as *Three-Pences*, before the beginning of *Eliz.* The *Present State of England* (which is an excellent Book, and to whose Perfection every One should contribute, because it gives an Account of all our Affairs, both to Foreigners, and Natives) is also to be corrected in this Particular, when it says, that in *Ed. I. time* 4 d. 3 d. and 2 d. were coined, which certainly is not true. But all the Observations I shall make on the Penny, will be bestowed, in some few Notes, upon a Passage, which I have transcribed from *Mr. Stow* in the Year 1279, as follows.

“Whereas, before this time, the Penny was wont to have a double Cross with a Crest, in such sort that the same might be easily broken in the midst, or into four quarters, and so to be made into Half-Pence, or Farthings; which Order was taken in the Year of Christ 1106, the 7 H. 1. It was now (a) ordained, that Pence, Half-Pence, and Farthings, should be made Round; whereupon were made these Verses following.

“Edward did smite Round, Penny, Half-Penny, Farthing,  
 “The Crosse passes the bond of all, throughout the Ring:  
 “The Kings side, was his Head and his Name written (b)  
 “The Crosse side, what City it was in coyned and smitten.  
 “To Poor man, ne to Priest, the Penny frayses nothing,  
 “Men give God, ay, the least; they feast him with a farthing.  
 “A thousand, two hundred, fourscore years, and mo,  
 “On this Money men wondred, when it first began to goe.

“And besides these Moneys, there was coined *Groats* (c) containing 4 d. the Piece (for what follows, he quotes *Registr. of Bury*) the Pound of Esterling Money, at this time, containing 12 Ounces; to wit, fine Silver (such as Men make into Foyle or Leaves, and is commonly called Silver of *Gutherom Lane*) 11 Ounces, 2 Esterlings (d) and one Ferling (e) and the other 17 d. ob. q. to be Allay. Also the Pound ought to weigh of Money XX s. and III d. by Accompt: so that no Pound ought to be above 20 s. 4 d. nor less than 20 s. 2 d. by Accompt. The Ounce is to weigh 20 d. the Penny to weigh 24 Grains (f).”

Thus far *Mr. Stow*; to which let me add to the Passages that are marked, as follows.

(a) It should seem by these Words, that Pence and Half-Pence were not Round, before this Year 1279, but they were certainly Round in H. 1. time. For in 1108, *Sim. Dunelm* says, the King appointed the Pence and Half-Pence should be all Round. And in 1180, *Philip Aymary* of *Tours* was sent for, to new coin the Money; which

was



was done, and made all *Round*, as saith *Radulf de Diceto*. But, it may be, that *Ed. 1.* was the first that appointed *Farthings* should be coined (like *Pence* and *Half-Pence*) *Round*. *Tho. Walsingham* 1280. and *H. Knyghton*, p. 2678, agree with *M. Westm.* in 1279, to say the same thing; that because the Penny was broken in half, to make two *Oboli*, and the *Oboli* again broken in halves, to make four *Quadrantes* or *Farthings*, it was ordained to coin the *Oboli*, and *Quadrantes*, *Round*; so that the Opportunity of cutting from each *Ob.* or *Quadr.* was taken away. And yet the same *T. Walsingham* in 1278, represents Matters as if the *Obolus* had been distinctly coined, before this, in the Shape of a *Semicircle*. *Obolus qui prius formam habebat Semicirculi, tanquam pars Denarii in medio divisi, fit rotundus*. Whereas, in truth, whenever it was in this Shape, it was certainly one half of a *Penny*, broken in funder.

(b) *Name written*. The Name of the King was indeed written, whether *Will. Henricus*, *Ricardus*, or *Edvardus*: But no Body, from thence, can tell whether it were *W. I.* or *II.* *Hen. I.*, *II.*, *III.*, *IV.*, *V.*, *VI.*, or *Ed. I.*, *II.*, *III.*, *IV.*, and, as far as I could ever find, *H. VII.* was the first that was to be certainly known by that Distinction, whose Name I have seen marked on a Silver Groat, *Henric. VII.* But in this I may be mistaken, having not seen all Coins, and yet enow to venture this Remark.

(c) *Groats*. This is the first time, that I have seen *Groats* mentioned to be coined, in 1279. And though I never suspect Mr. *Stow's* Faithfulness, or Industry, yet I believe he was here mistaken; as well, because in 9 *E. 3.* no mention is made of them, when *Pence* and *Half-Pence* are forbidden to be melted by the Goldsmith, since the same Reason would have forbidden the melting down *Groats* (as afterwards was done 17 *R. 2.*) which forbad the melting the others; as also because that Coin appears not in Mr. *Lowndes's* Accounts, before the 27 *E. 3.* which was in 1353, though *Tho. Walsingham* mentions them in 1351, but he seems not to have known there were ever any such Pieces before that Year: For in that Year, he says, that, *William Edington Bishop of Winton, and Lord Treasurer, a Man of great Prudence, but one who consulted more the King's Profit, than that of the Kingdom, found out, and coined new Pieces; i. e. Grossum et dimidium Grossi. Groats and Half-Groats, but of less weight than they ought to have been. i. e. I suppose, they weighed not as much as four Pennies.* After this, we meet with the Name often, and most commonly applied to 4*d.* though (as I think) sometimes to more than 4*d.* You may also see that 2*d.* was not called by the name *Two-Pence*, but a *Half-Groat*, or *Half-Groz.* And in 19 *H. 7.* *Half-Groats* are called *Pence of Two-Pence*. *H. Knyghton* mentions *Grossa* in 1378, and says it was 4*d.* and so much was given to the King for every Man and Woman.

(d) *Esterlings*. Here *Sterling* signifies a *Penny-weight*, because it signifies a *Penny* of fine Silver, which is now called *Standard*. And I have never, but once, seen *Sterling* (when it signifies a Piece of Money) stand for any thing but a *Penny*, and that is, in *Monasticon Angl.* 2 Vol. p. 471, where it signifies a *Half-Penny*: For there it is said, that *Hens* were a *Sterling* a-piece; not in express Words, but by Consequence; for it is there said, that Wheat was 2*s.* the Quarter; and that the 6<sup>th</sup> Part of a Bushel of Wheat was valued at a *Sterling*; now the Bushel is valued at 3*d.* (when the Quarter is at 2*s.*) and the 6<sup>th</sup> Part of 3*d.* is a *Half-Penny*; and so *Sterling* must be there a *Half-Penny*. This was occasioned by *Ed. 1.* calling in *Pollards*, *Crocards*, or *Cocodones*, and *Rosaries*; all which were coined, and brought into *England* by Foreigners, and underhand went for *Sterlings*, (*i. e.* for *Pence*;) but in the Year 1301, were suffered to go but for *Oboli*, or *Half-Pence*; and that not long neither: for at *Christmas* they were called in, and made *Oboli*; and at *Easter* following they were cried down quite: But Corruptions are not so easily parted with; they went currant among the People longer, and retained still the name of *Sterlings*, though they went for but *Half-Pence*. *H. Knyghton*, p. 2493.



(e) *Ferling*, is a *Farthing*, or the 4<sup>th</sup> Part of a *Sterling*.

(f) The *Penny-weight* is here said to contain 24 Grains; and so it does to this Day. Yet *Tho. Rudborn*, in *Hist. Maj. Winton. Anglia Sacra*, Vol. I. p. 257. says it was determined by *W. Conq.* 1083, that a *Penny Sterling*, round and unclipped, was to weigh 32 Grains. However, we are sure it was so determined by Act of Parliament, 51 H. 3. and so again, 12 H. 7. *That every Sterling shall weigh 32 Grains of Wheat, that grew in the midst of the Ear of Wheat; and a Standard for the King's Treasury is to be made according to this Affize.* To reconcile this Difference, it is probable, that 24 Grains, as they are Weights to weigh by, may be truly as heavy, as 32 Grains of Wheat; which is as much as the Acts of Parliament require; and it would have been troublesome, to have made a *Brass Weight*, no heavier than the 32<sup>d</sup> Part of a Penny.

**Obolus.** Signifies an Half-Penny, or (as you have seen before) the half of any Thing. And as *Denariatus Terræ* signifies a *Perch* of Land (or let it be any other Measure, or Quantity) so *Obolatus Terræ* signifies *half* that Land; and a *Farthing* (called also *Fardella*, *Fardingdela*, *Farundel*, and other Names, which you may see in *H. Spelman's Gloss.*) signifies a *quarter* of it. So *Acra*, an Acre of Land, contains (like a Mark in Money) 160 *Den.* 320 *Ob.* and 640 *Quadrantes*. I cannot find, when *Obolus*, Half-Penny, was first coined: but we may imagine it was coined, as early as ever we can find it mentioned, because it is not a Denomination, which may be answered by other Money (as a *Pound* by 20*s.* if there had been any Shillings, or a Mark, by 13*s.* 4*d.* or a Shilling by 12 Pence) but it must be a distinct coined Piece. And so for

*Ferlingus*, or *Farthing*. I shall make an end when I have observed to you, that when you meet, in old Donations, with such words as *Librata Terræ*, *Marcata*, *Solidata*, or *Denariata*, and the like, you are to understand as much Land as will yield the Rent of a *Pound*, a *Mark*, a *Shilling*, or a *Penny*, by the Year.

Here follows a TABLE, by which you will perceive into how many *Shillings*, a Pound-weight of Silver has, at several times, been coined; together with its Allay, and what the Ounce was worth in common Estimation.

And thus it continued all the Reign of E. 3. R. 2. H. 4, till 9 H. 5.

Years.			Finen.		Allay.		Shillings.		The Ounce worth.		
			oz.	dw.	oz.	dw.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.
28	E.	1.	11	2	0	18	XX	III	0	1	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
20	E.	3.	11	2	0	18	XXII	VI	0	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
27	E.	3.	11	2	0	18	XXV		0	2	1
9	H.	5.	11	2	0	18	XXX		0	2	6
1	H.	6.	11	2	0	18	XXXVII	VI	0	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
4	H.	6.	11	2	0	18	XXX		0	2	6
24	H.	6.	11	2	0	18	XXX		0	2	6

*Fabian* says, 23 E. 3. that he coined Groats and Half-Groats that wanted 2*s.* 6*d.* of the Old Standard, in a Pound Troy. This was in 1349, or 1350, but it is a Year, or two, too soon.

Years.



Years.	Finen.		Alloy.		Shillings.		The Ounce worth.		
	oz.	dw.	oz.	dw.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.
49 (39) H. 6.	11	2	0	18	XXXVII	VI	0	3	1½
5, 8, 11; 16, 24. E. 4.	11	2	0	18	XXXVII	VI	0	3	1½
1 R. 3.									
9 H. 7.									
1 H. 8.	11	2	0	18	XXXXV		0	3	9
34 H. 8.	10	0	2	0	XXXXVIII		0	4	0
36 H. 8.	6	0	6	0	XXXXVIII		0	4	0
37 H. 8.	4	0	8	0	XXXXVIII		0	4	0
1 E. 6.	4	0	8	0	XXXXVIII		0	4	0
3 E. 6.	6	0	6	0	LXXII		0	6	0
5 E. 6.	3	0	9	0	LXXII		0	6	0
6 E. 6.	11	1	0	19	LX		0	5	0
Q. Mary	11	0	1	0	LX		0	5	0
2 Eliz.	11	2	0	18	LX		0	5	0
19 Eliz.	11	2	0	18	LX		0	5	0
43 Eliz.	11	2	0	18	LXII		0	5	2
Jac. 1.									
Car. 1.									
Car. 2.									
Jac. 2.	11	2	0	18	LXII		0	5	2
W. and M.									
Q. Anne.									

I cannot leave this Head, till I have taken notice of one or two Specialties relating to Coin. The first is, that when Sir *Rob. Cotton* was called to deliver his Opinion, touching the *Alteration of the Coin*, before the Lords of the Privy-Council in 2 *Car. I.* he lays great



great load on the Reign of *H. VI.* for mismanagement of this Affair of Money, as if it had suffered some extraordinary Debasement in his Time, and done him great Dishonour, and great Mischief in the Minds of his Subjects, and afforded his Rival (*Rich. Duke of York*) an Occasion of high Complaint. And that when my Lord Treasurer *Burleigh*, and Sir *Thomas Smith*, were called upon by *Queen Elizabeth*, to deliver their Opinions about the change of Money, they advised her to reduce the Standard to the ancient *Parity* and *Purity* of her Great-Grand-Father King *Edward IV.* Upon this, I cannot but observe, that *H. V.* in the 9<sup>th</sup> of his Reign (according to Mr. *Lowndes's Accounts*) had raised the Money to XXX*s.* the Pound; and that *H. VI.* in the first of his Reign, advanced it to XXXVII*s.* VI*d.* but keeping still to the *Old Standard* of Fineness (without a change of which, all other Changes seem to be but merely *nominal*; for 37*s.* and 6*d.* will buy no more Wheat, than 30*s.* will do, when once People come to know there is no more fine Silver in 37*s.* 6*d.* than in 30*s.*) but even this Change continued not long; for 2 *H. VI. c.* 13, upon Complaint made in *Parliament*, that there was a scarcity of *white Money*, by reason that Silver uncoined was bought and sold at XXXII*s.* the *Pound Troy*; whereas it was of no more value, when coined, than XXXII*s.* (12*d.* abated for the Coinage) it was enacted that none should buy or sell any Silver uncoined for above XXX*s.* the *Pound Troy*, besides the Fashion. I will not answer for the Reasonableness of this Act; but it proves clearly that the *Pound* did not long contain 37*s.* 6*d.* and it appears evidently, that 4 *H. VI.* it came again to XXX*s.* and so continued to the very last Year of his Reign, when it was again advanced to 37*s.* 6*d.* and so continued for near fifty Years. So that the greatest *Debasement* of King *H. VI.* was just equal to, and indeed the same with, the *Parity*, and *Purity* of King *Edward IV.*

The greatest *Debasement* of Money, is the greatest *Allay*, or Mixture of baser Metal with Silver (and that is only bad, because People are deceived by its looks, and know not how much fine Silver there is in such or such a Piece) and that was in 5 *Ed. VI.* when 9 Ounces of *Allay* were added to 3 Ounces of *fine Silver*, and coined into 72 Shillings; so that a Pound of fine Silver, at that rate of Mixture, was coined into 288*s.* or 14*l.* 8*s.* 00*d.* and the Ounce into 24*s.* which was intolerable; and when in the Year following, this *Base Money* was called down, the People suffered extremely by it. I have by me, now, an Account of that Time, wherein, by the *first* Proclamation (dated *July 9.*) a *College* lost (out of an 118*l.* 6*s.* 11*d.*) 29*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* ob. *q.* And by the *second* Proclamation (dated *Aug. 17.* immediately following) out of 45*l.* 3*s.* the *College* lost 15*l.* 1*s.* which was a 4<sup>th</sup> and a 3<sup>d</sup> Part of every One's Cash, in the Space of two Months. It will be much for the Honour of *the late Reign*, to have remedied the greatest Abuse of Money, that was ever known in *England*, at a time of the greatest Danger and Expence, with very little Grievance of the People. But, sure, it is better to prevent a moderate Mischief, than redress a very great one; and, perhaps, a *Proclamation* of three or four Lines, forbidding any *clipped Money* to be received into the King's Exchequer, in 1690, would have prevented the clipping and spoiling five Millions. The *second* Thing I would observe, is, That an Historian who lived in the Days of *H. VI.* and *Ed. IV.* tells us, that such was the Enmity of the *House of York*, to that of *Lancaster*, that when *Ed. IV.* came to the Crown, not only all that was given and gotten, under the three foregoing Reigns of *H. IV.* V, VI. was taken away; but that the *Money* also, as well *Gold*, as *Silver*, was changed and coined a-new, that the Name of *Henry* might be no more remembered. *Sed & Moneta tam in Auro, quam Argento, ut Nomen in ea prorsus deleatur Henrici, similiter mutata est, & denuo fabricata.* *Continuatio Hist. Croyland, An. 1461.* But Time hath made all even again, and left us as many Coins of the *Henry's*, as of *Edward the IVth.*



The last Thing I would observe to you is, That though (as you see in the Table) the Pound was sometimes 22s. 6d. 25s. 30s. 37s. 6d. 45s. 48s. 72s. 60s. and 62s. as it now stands. Yet, in *Accompts*, it always signified 20s. just, and neither more nor less. When the Pound contained (for Example) 30s. he who owed another Man *Five Pounds*, did not pay him 150s. but an 100. And it is as certain that an 100s. signified *five Pounds* at that time, and no less, as it does now. This must have been ever since XXs. came to *weigh*, and to be called, a *Pound*. And so it was with the *Saxon Pound*, that was always 48s. And he who owed *five Pounds*, before the *Norman Times*, did certainly pay 240s. which was, both in *Weight* and *Denomination*, five Pounds: Whereas five Pounds are now only so in *Name*, and not in *Weight*. Let me end this Chapter, with giving you the Names (from Mr. *Cambden*) of several false and small Pieces, that were heretofore in use among our Fathers. In the Time of E. III. *Crocards*, *Pollards*, *Rosaries*, *Cocadones*, *Stepings*, and *Staldings*, were cried down. *Gally-Half-Pence*, which were brought hither by the *Genoese Gallies*, cried down by H. IV. *Suskins* and *Dodkins* by H. V. and *Blanks* by H. VI. There were also little Pieces coined by H. VII. called *Dandypratts*, which, I suppose, were little and contemptible Things, because that Word has since been used to signify small and worthless People.

## C H A P. IV.

*Of the Price of Corn, and other Commodities, for six hundred Years last past.*

HAVING dispatched, with what *exactness* I could, the Chapters of *Moneys*, I am now come to speak to the Price of *Corn* and other *Commodities*; which is (whether you know it, or not) the readiest way to the Solution of your *Third*, and most material Question. For, your Business is to know (as near as you can) what Estate or Summ of Money will *now-a-days* be equal, or equivalent to *five Pounds* (let that be the supposed Summ in this Discourse) in the Reign of H. VI. and to this End, your Care will be, to find out how much *Meat*, *Drink*, or *Cloth*, might be purchased in H. VI. Reign, with V l. and then to find out, how much of the Money now current, will be required to purchase the same quantity of *Meat*, *Drink*, and *Cloth*. For, since Money is of no other use, than as it is the Thing with which we purchase the Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life, it is evident, that if V l. in H. VI. Days, would purchase *five Quarter of Wheat*, *four Hogsbheads of Beer*, and *six Yards of Cloth*, he who then had V l. in his Pocket, was full as rich a Man, as he who has now XX l. if with that XX l. he can purchase no more *Wheat*, *Beer*, or *Cloth*; than the other. I do not mean hereby to pre-judge this to be the Proportion; but use this Instance to let you see, that this is the properest way of coming to know, what Estate is *now* most answerable to an Estate of V l. *per Ann.* two hundred and fifty Years ago. And though the comparing the Reign of H. VI. with your own Times, would be sufficient for your particular Purpose; yet since I have made the same *Collections*, for the Years foregoing, and for those which follow the Reign of H. VI. it will be (I believe) neither ungrateful nor unprofitable, to give them to the Reader; especially since other *Colleges*, which may be under the



like Obligations, were founded, some *before*, and some *since*, the Reign of *H. VI.* It will be most for the Reader's Use, and Ease, that I set down the Particulars in *Order of Time*; and if he shall chance to judge many of them to be trivial (as some perhaps may judge them all to be) as standing by themselves, I desire him to consider, that, in conjunction with the rest, they may be of some Moment; and that others may like to see those very Particulars which he so little esteems. As to the *Year of our Lord*, (into which I change the *Years of the Kings Reigns*) I will not pretend to be most exact; as well because I think it not much to the Purpose to be so, as also because each Year of a King's Reign, does unavoidably fall into two Years of *our Lord*, and if I hit either of them, or come very near them, it answers my Intention.

In King *Ina's* Laws, which were made betwixt 712, and 727, it is said, *Ovis cum Agno suo valet unum Solidum, usque ad XIII Noctes post Pascha.* A Ewe, with her Lamb, is worth one Shilling, till thirteen Nights after *Easter.* *Brompton, Chr. 766.* but instead of thirteen, it should be fourteen, as it is in the *Saxon* of Mr. *Lambard.*

Between the Years 900, and 1000, *Ednoth* bought two Hides of Land at *Stapleford* (in *Bedfordshire*) for C Shillings of the best Silver, and gave them to *Ramsay Abby.* *D. Gale's Hist. Ramsf. 415. and p. 471. Hist. Eliensf. a Palfry* was at Xs. which was about the Year 966. And *p. 473,* an Acre of Land was purchased at 1s. and a Hyde at C.s. from whence one might think, that a Hyde contained 100 Acres, but it contained 120 Acres. And, once for all, you will do well to remember, that a *Hyde*, a *Yard-Land*, and a *Knight's Fee*, contains no certain Number of Acres, but differs according to different Places; as you may see in the *Glossaries.*

In the *Senatus Consulta de Monticulis*, in the Time of King *Ethelred*, about the Year 1000, if a Horse be lost, the Compensation must be 30s. A Mare, or Colt of a Year old, 20s. A Mule or young Ass at 12s. An Ox at 30d. A Cow 24d. A Swine 8d. A Man 1l. A Sheep 1s. A Goat at 11d. Note, That this is *Saxon Money*, 5d. to the Shilling. and 48s. to the Pound. *Whelock, p. 96.*

In 1043, *Chron. Saxon.* Corn was so dear, as no One ever remembered it; inasmuch that a *Sester* of Wheat was sold for LXd. *H. of Huntingdon* explains this *Sextarius*, by saying it was as much as would load a Horse; and so does *Rob. de Monte*, in 1041. and both of them say it was sold for V Sol. And both of them lived about the Year 1140. A *Sester* or *Sextarius* was what we now call a *Quarter*, or a *Seam*, containing eight Bushels. So Sir *H. Spelman.* And in Confirmation of it, cites *Huntingdon, L. 6. Circa hoc tempus (scil. Ed. Confess.) tanta fames Angliam invasit, quod Sextarius Frumenti, qui Equo uni solet esse oneri, venundaretur V Solidis, & etiam plus.* These two Authors that wrote in *Latin*, and lived an hundred Years after, in the *Norman Times*, translated LXd. into V Sol. because in *their Days* the Shilling contained 12d. But in the *Saxon Times*, i. e. when this Famine or Scarcity happened, 1043, the Shilling contained but 5d. so that LXd. with the Saxons was XII Sol. So the Fragment of *Ælfric Grammaticus* (cited by Mr. *Sommer*) who died, as Mr. *Wharton* thinks, in *Ann. 1051, Anglia Sacr. P. I. Libra on Leden is Pund on Englisc, Fif Penegas gemacigath ænne Scillinge. & XXX Penega ænne Mancs. i. e. Libra in*

*Latin*



Latin is a Pound in English. Five Pennies make one Schilling, and 30 Pennies a Mark. A Mark was therefore VI Sol. as I have before observed, because there are 6 times 5 in 30.

And it will not be amiss, to hint to you, on this Occasion, the Necessity there is of remembering how near your Author lived to the Times he writes of; because most Men are apt to speak of Ages past, according to the Ways and Customs of their own. Thus, in the Laws of King Athelstan, as they are translated by John Brompton (*inter X Scriptores*) pag. 847. an Offender is to forfeit for his first Fault, XXXd. for his second, LXd. and for his third, Xs. Now this could not possibly be in King Athelstan's Time, when LXd. made XII s. but in John Brompton's Time, (who lived under Edw. III.) Xs. was double (as it still is) to LXd. and was a treble Mulct for a third Offence, as Reason required. And thus in L. 59, of King Ina, He who wounds or maims the Horn of an Ox, is to pay Xd. [Brompton says Vd.] of a Cow, 2d. [B. says Vd.] Who cuts off the Tail of an Ox, is to pay IVd. [B. says Vd.] of a Cow, Vd. Who puts out the Eye of an Ox, is to pay Vd. of a Cow, 1s. [Brompton says 12d.] Now, though a Shilling in Brompton's Time had in it 12d. yet in Ina's Time, it had but 5d. I could give you many Instances of this Nature, if it were useful; but these (which are not alien from my Design) may suffice to justify the Caution I gave you, of minding your Author's Age. But, leaving you to take part, either with my Conjectures, or with the two above-named Authors, Rob. de Monte, and H. Huntingdon. I set down

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
the Price of a Quarter of Wheat, in 1043, at	—	—	—
	00	00	60

In 1125, a Sextar or Quarter of Wheat, at	—	—	—
	01	00	00

So say *Annales de Margan* (put out by Dr. Gale) there was so great a Famine. But H. Huntingdon in the same Year says, p. 382. *Vendebatur Onus equi frumentarium, VI s.* And Rob. de Monte, in the same Year, says it was the dearest Year in England, that was ever known; for a Horse-load of Wheat was sold at VI Sol. This, upon the Credit of these two Writers, seems more likely, than the Price set by the *Analist*, of 20s.

If the *Liber niger Sbaecarii*, were written in the Time of H. I. as some affirm, it ought to be noted down, in the next place, (since he began 1100, and ended 1135.)

1. Pro Mensura Tritici ad Panem Centum Hominum.	—	—	—
	00	01	00
2. Pro Corpore Bovis Pascualis.	—	—	—
	00	01	00
Pro Præbenda XX Equorum.	—	—	—
	00	00	04
3. Pro Ariete vel Ove.	—	—	—
	00	00	04

1. This was the Exchange made by the King; that instead of Provisions for his Household, he might have some ready Money to defray the Expences of his Court, and pay his Soldiers. Instead, therefore, of Bread for a hundred Men (for one Meal, I suppose) the Tenant was to pay a Shilling.

2. Instead of a stalled Ox, the Tenant was to pay a Shilling. Mr. Selden, in his Notes on Eadmer, says it was five Shillings. But Sir H. Spelman (in v. Firma) who saw the Book, and transcribed this Passage, puts it down *Solidum unum*; and him I follow. He says, it is a Book on which the Sun does seldom shine; meaning, that it is rarely seen and hard to come at. He had the Opportunity of transcribing many



Pieces of it, which he has given, in several places of his *Glossary*; and so has Mr. *Lowndes* transcribed a good deal of it, in his *Essay*. But this is all that I could find to my present Purpose.

3. By *Provender* for Horses is always meant *Oats*. And instead of bringing *Oats* for XX Horses (for a Night, I imagine) the Tenant was to allow 4 Pence.

In the Laws of *H. I. cap. 76*. Forty Sheep are valued at \_\_\_\_\_

About the Year 1145. the Tenant of a Place was to pay yearly XX s. or VII Oxen, each worth III s. *M. Paris*, p. 1013.

In 1185. The Tenants of *Shireborn*, are by Custom, to pay either 2 d. or 4 Hens, which they will. And by the Custom of *Belesball*, they are to have a *Ram*, or VIII d. (and in the Preface to King *Athelstan's* Laws, a *Ram* was at 4 d. *Vel unus Aries, qui valeat IIII Denarios*) *Monast.* Vol. II. p. 528.

In 1196. So great a scarcity of Corn that, at *Salisbury*, a *Sema* of Wheat was sold at \_\_\_\_\_

In 1197. A *Sema* of Wheat (*i. e.* a Quarter) at \_\_\_\_\_

*Tho. Wikes, Chron. D. Gale* (to whom we are obliged for the Edition of this, and other Historians) put his Note under the word *Sema quatuor modios*. Which, surely, is not so; for *Sema* is a Quarter, or 8 Bushel. And so Sir *H. Spelman*, *Seam VIII modiorum mensura; sic de Frumento dictum, quod unius Equi sit Sauma, i. e. Sarcina*. So that with him, a Quarter of Wheat is a Horse-load. And, doubtless, a Quarter is a quarter or fourth Part of some Load or Weight; for so *quarta, quartalis, and quartalium*, signifies a Peck or the fourth Part of a Bushel: and a *Quart* is the fourth Part of a Gallon.

In 1199. King *John* ordered that a Tun of *Poictou-Wine*, should be sold for no more than \_\_\_\_\_

A Tun of *Anjou-Wine* at \_\_\_\_\_

No French Wine above \_\_\_\_\_

Unless so very good, that One would be glad to give, per Tun —

No Sextarium, of *Poictou-Wine*, to be sold above \_\_\_\_\_

Nor any *White*, dearer than \_\_\_\_\_

But the Merchants could not bear this *Affise*, and sold the *Red* for 6 d. and the *White* for 8 d. the Gallon. And the Land (as the Historian observes) was filled with Drink and Drunkards. *Annales Burtonenses. Ann. 1199*. Mr. *Stow* mentions no Measure, but a Gallon, for *Sextarius*. And Sir *H. Spelman* says, that at *Paris*, a *Modius Vini* holds 36 *Sextarios*, and that a *Sextar* is 8 Pints. At this rate *Tonellus Vini* will hold but about 60 Gallons, which is the nearest to our *Hogshead*. Mr. *Stow* calls the *Poictou Wine*, Wine of *Rochel*: And for the French Wine he says the *Affise* was 1 l. 6 s. 4 d. by the Tun. And says, p. 165. that they who sold by the Tun, *Hogshead*, or otherwise, contrary to this *Affise*, were to be punished. But, if we are to understand in this place, a Tun of English Measure (which is 252 Gallons) by the word *Tonellus*, then cannot a Gallon of *Poictou Wine*, come to 4 d. no, nor to 1 d. since in XX s. there are but 240 d. I suspect that *Sextarius* is more than a Gallon: for I do not think, that so long ago as 1199, *Red Wine* at 1 d. ob. and *White* at 2 d. the Quart, would have filled the Land either with Drink or Drunkards; especially when *Anjou*, and *Poictou* were in the English Hands; it must be cheaper

l.	s.	d.
01	00	00

00	13	04
00	18	08

01	00	00
01	04	00
01	05	00
01	06	08
00	00	04
00	00	06

much,



much, to make that Observation good. And though the *Rochel* Hog-head be but 46 Gallons, yet it will not do.

In 1202. So great a Scarcity (occasioned by continual Rains) that a Quarter of Wheat was sold for more than (*Annales Waverl.*) ———— 1. s. d.  
00 12 00

In 1205. There was so great a Frost, lasting from January 14. to March 19. that Wheat was at (*M. Paris.*) the Quarter. ———— 00 12 00

Mr. *Stow* says the Ground was so hard, that it could not be tilled, and a Quarter of *Wheat* was sold the Summer following for a *Marc*; which in *H. II.* Days, had usually been at 1*s.* *Beans* and *Pease*, by the Quarter 6*s.* 8*d.* And *Oats*, that were wont to be at 4*d.* the Quarter, were now at 3*s.* 4*d.* *Fabian* puts *Wheat*, now, at 15*s.*

In or about 1217, when the King came to *Redbourn*, the *Camerarius* of *St. Albans* lost three good Horses, two Asses, and a good new Cart: all which were worth, at least, 50*s.*

When *Fulco de Brent* came to *Langley*, the *Camerarius* lost three Houses, that were burnt, and 35 Hogs, which all came to at least XL. and a Plow that cost X*s.* (which is a mistake for X*d.*) And when the King of *France's* *Marechal* came, he lost many Oxen, Cows, Sheep, and other Things, and 24 Horses, valued, at least, at 40 Marks, *i. e.* 26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* *M. Paris*, p. 1059. The *Camerarius* was the Receiver of the Rents, and who provided Clothes for the Monks.

In 1223. Wheat was very dear, and sold *per* Quarter, at (*Stow*, in 7. *H. III.*) ———— 00 12 00

About 1232. The *Abbot* of *St. Albans*, going a Journey, and attended with six Esquires on Horseback, agrees, that if the Horses die on the Way, he will give for each Horse X*s.* and the Horses are to be strong and handsom; *decentes, & fortes ad portandum.* *M. Paris*, p. 1051.

In 1237. Wheat was by the Quarter, ———— 00 03 04  
Barly, ———— 00 02 00  
Oats, ———— 00 01 00

*Antiq. Peterborough*, p. 304. Where I must observe, that I reduce all Measures to a Quarter, for Uniformity's sake. Here I meet with the Word *Sceppe*, which the *Glossaries* forget; but it signifies a *Busshel*, as appears by casting up the Summ here mentioned, where XXVIII Quarter, and one *Sceppe* of Wheat are valued at 4*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.* which is just 5*d.* the *Busshel*.

If you chance to meet with any young Companions of yours, who slight these sort of Studies, you may acquaint them, that the present excellent, most learned, and most useful Bishop of *Ely*, put out, with no small Labour of his own, the *Antiquities*, out of which I have told you, what Price *Wheat*, and *Barly*, and *Oats* bear, in or about 1237. Or (as *Dr. Kennet*) 1240.

In 1243, and 1244. Corn so plentiful, that *Wheat*, and *Pease* were each of them by the Quarter (*M. Paris* in *Annis.*) ———— 00 02 00

In 1246. A Quarter of *Wheat* (so dear) at (*Tho. Wikes.*) ———— 00 16 00

In 1247. A Quarter of *Wheat* (still dear) at (*Tho. Wikes.*) ———— 00 13 04

In 1257. A Quarter of *Wheat* (excessively dear) at (*Fabian*) ———— 01 04 00

In 1258. So great a Famine, that many People were starved, so that a Quarter of *Wheat* was sold at ———— 00 16 00



So *Walter Hemingford*. Which makes me suspect, that *Fabian* was mistaken in his Accounts of the foregoing Year, which make Wheat *one third* dearer. Mr. *Stow* says, it was XV s. nay XX s. the Quarter.

In 1270. Wheat was so dear, that it was sold at, the Quarter —  
And sometimes at 16 s. the Bushel, which makes it at 6 l. 8 s.

So the *Author* of *Antiq. Britan.* in *Vita Joh. Pecham*, who says that Provisions were so scarce, that Parents did eat their own Children. But, I hope, we need not believe him; it is only an Expression of the greatest Want imaginable.

In 1286. Wheat was at, the Quarter, — — — — —

But such a Storm of Rain, Thunder, and Lightning, fell on St. Margaret's Night, that Wheat came by degrees to, the Quarter —

And this Dearness continued off and on for about forty Years, so that sometimes it was sold at London for 4 l. the Quarter. *H. Knyghton*, p. 2468.

In 1287. Wheat was so cheap, that it was sold at, the Quarter, —

In 1288. So great the plenty of Corn, and scarcity of Money, that Wheat was sold, by the Quarter, at — — — — —

So *Angl. Sacr. Annales Wigorn.* The *Waverly Annals* say at 2 s. Mr. *Stow* says, that Wheat was sold (though the hottest Summer that was remembred) at London for 3 s. 4 d. in other Parts of England, at 1 s. 8 d. and 1 s. 4 d. and 1 s. nay, in the North, and West Parts, at 8 d. the Quarter. Barly at 6 d. and Oats at 4 d. and Pease and Beans very cheap. And yet *Fabian* sets it down this Year at 9 s. 4 d. which is very dear. But it is easie to be mistaken in setting down one Year for another. And therefore when *H. Knyghton* says, that great Dearness continued off and on, for forty Years, we must understand him candidly; for now and then, it was, in that space of Time, exceedingly cheap.

In 1289. *Walsingham* says Wheat was so cheap, that in some Places it was sold, the Quarter at 1 s. 8 d. in others at 1 s. 4 d. and in others at 1 s. which does certainly belong to the Year foregoing. *Fabian* makes this a dear Year, and says Wheat was by the Quarter, at 12 s. and says it went on increasing till it came in Ed. II. Time to 2 l. the Quarter.

It may be, Mr. *Dugdale's* Account, in his *Warwickshire Antiq.* may be the more likely, as being between the Extreams, of *Walsingham* and *Fabian*, as follows.

Wheat, the Quarter, at	—	—	—	—	00	06	00
Rye, —	—	—	—	—	00	05	00
Barly —	—	—	—	—	00	03	00
Beans and Pease, —	—	—	—	—	00	02	08
Oats, —	—	—	—	—	00	02	00
A Swan at —	—	—	—	—	00	03	04
A Duck at —	—	—	—	—	00	00	01

Mr. *Stow's* Account of this Year is, that by reason of great Hail, and Rains, Wheat rose from 2 s. the Quarter, to X s. 8 d. and, by degrees came to XX s. the Quarter.



In 1290. *Tho. Walsingham*, and from him the Author of *Antiq. Britan.* in *Vita. Joh. Pecham*, says, that Wheat, which had been at 2s. the Quarter, rose (by reason of great Rains and Storms) to ———

Which Scarcity continued off and on, for many Years.

In 1294. Wheat (dear) by the Quarter. (*Fabian*) ———

And sometimes XXs. as *H. Knyghton*.

In 1298. At *Scarborough* in *Yorkshire*, the Price of an Ox, ———

A Cow at ———

A Heifer at ———

A Sheep at ———

*Monasticon*, Vol. II. p. 403.

In 1299. This Year, was made an Act of *Common-Council*, for Prices of Victuals to be sold at *London*, by Consent of the King and Nobility : And as to Poultry, it was as follows. *Stow*.

A fat Cock, ———

Two Pullets, ———

A fat Capon, ———

A Goose, ———

A Mallard, ———

A Partrich, ———

A Pheasant, ———

A Heron, ———

A Plover, ———

A Swan, ———

A Crane, ———

Two Woodcocks, ———

A fat Lamb, from *Christmas* to *Shrovetide*, ———

The same, for all the Year after, ———

In 1302. In *Dugdale's Hist. of St. Paul's*, p. 32. Wheat, by the Quarter, at ———

Malt ground, at ———

Pease, at ———

Oats, at ———

A Bull, at ———

A Cow, at ———

A fat Mutton, at ———

An Ewe-Sheep, at ———

A Capon, at ———

A Cock or Hen, ———

In 1309. *Will. Thorn* (*inter X Scriptores*) in his *Chron.* p. 2010. gives us an Account of the Feast which *Ralf de Born*, Prior of *St. Augustine's Cant.* made on his Installation Day : In which it appears that he paid very great Rates for many Particulars of his Bill of Fare, considering the Times. I have given the whole, but computed the Price of each Particular, that the Reader may see a little of the Spirit of that Age, and also what Proportion Commodities then bore, to what they do at this Day. And it will not be amiss to give him the Preface which *William Thorn* makes to this Bill of Fare. *Because* (says he) *the present Times (1380) may not, by any means, be compared with the foregoing ones, for plenty and abundance of all sort of Things, I have thought it convenient, to give the following Account of this Feast, not that Po-*



sterity might imitate this Costliness, but rather might admire it. And thus it was.

	l.	s.	d.
Of Wheat, 53 Quarters, Price XIX l. [So that a Quarter came to —	00	07	02
Of Malt, 58 Quart. Price XVII l. Xs. [A Quarter at —	00	06	00
Of Wine, 11 Tun, Price XXIII l. [A Tun at or about —	02	03	07½
Oats for the Guests, as well within, as without the Gates of the City,			
20 Quarter, Price IV l. [So that a Quarter came to —	00	04	00
For Spice ( <i>pro Speciebus</i> ) XXVIII l.			
For CCC l. of Wax, Price VIII l. [So that a Pound came to near —	00	00	06½
Almonds, D l. Price III l. XVIII s. [So that a Pound came to above —	00	00	01¼
XXX Ox Carcasses ( <i>pro Carcois Bóum</i> ) Price XXVIII l. [Each			
came to —	00	18	00
Of Hogs, C. Price XVI l. [So that each Hog came to about —	00	03	02¼
Of Muttons, [ <i>de Multonibus</i> ] CC. Price XXX l. [Each came to —	00	03	00
Of Geese [ <i>de Aucis</i> ] M. Price XVI l. [Each Goose about —	00	00	03¾
Of Capons and Hens, D. Price VII l. Vs. [Each Fowl came to —	00	00	03
Of Pullets, [ <i>de Pulonibus</i> ] CCCCLXXIII. Price III l. XIV s. [Each —	00	00	01½
Of Pigs, [ <i>de Porcellis</i> ] CC. Price VI l. [Each Pig at —	00	00	06
Of Swans, 24. Price VII l. [Each Swan came to —	00	05	10
Of Rabbits, 600. Price XV l. [Each Rabbit came to —	00	00	06
<i>De Scentis de Braun</i> , 16. Price III l. Vs. Each <i>Shield of Brawn</i>			
(and therefore Mr. Somner guesses right, that it should be read <i>Scutis</i> )			
came to —	00	04	00¾
Of Partrich, Mallards, Bitterns ( <i>Butores</i> ) and Larks, XVIII l.			
Of Earthen Pots, M. Price XV s.			
Of Salt, 9 Quart. Price Xs. it is 9 <i>Summas</i> . But it is, without			
doubt, a mistake, for Salt was never so low, as <i>Three-Half-Pence</i> the			
<i>Busbel</i> .			
<i>De Scipbis</i> , M. CCCC, Mugs, I believe, or <i>Wooden Cans</i> , to drink			
in, or it may be <i>Black Jacks</i> .			
Dishes and Platters, [ <i>Platellis</i> ] or Trenchers, M. M. M. C. C. C.			
<i>De Scopis &amp; Gachis</i> . Price VIII l. IV s. <i>Scopa</i> , is a Broom or Bee-			
fom, and, by its use, a Penitentiary <i>Discipline</i> . But what it is here, or			
what <i>Gachis</i> signifies, I know not.			
Of Fish, Cheefe, Milk, Onions, &c. Price II l. Xs.			
Eggs, 9600, Price IV l. Xs. Which are about 9 for —	00	00	01
Of Saffron, [ <i>Crocus</i> ] and Pepper. Price I l. XIV s.			
In Coals, and [ <i>Doleis</i> ] setting up Furnaces. Price II l. VIII s.			
In CCC Ells of Caneum, Canvas, or Flax. Price IV l.			
In making up Tables, Treffels, and Dreffers. Price I l. XIV s.			
Given to the Cooks and their Boys, VI l.			
To the Minstrels, or Musick III l. Xs.			
The Sum total is CCLXXXVIII l. VII s. 00 d. taking in the Presents			
and Gratuities. At this Feast there were 6000 Guests that sat down at			
the Tables, and they had 3000 Messes. And therefore instead of <i>quo</i>			
<i>respondentes</i> (at the End of this Account) I would read <i>Correspondentes</i> :			
answering to, or sitting <i>Opposite</i> to each other. And so there was a			
Mess to each Couple. I observed above, that this <i>Prior</i> paid dear for			
many Particulars, and if you will compare this Account with the fore-			
going ones, you will find his <i>Corn</i> of each kind, his <i>Beef</i> , and <i>Mutton</i> ,			



*Swans*, to be at a high Rate; and as for the Article of *Rabbits*, I am almost sure there must be some mistake in it, for they could never be so dear (so long ago) as 6*d.* a-piece.

In 1309. A pair of Shoes, (*Spelm. Gl. v. Vatarius*) at \_\_\_\_\_

l. s. d.  
00 00 04

In 1314. *Antiq. Oxon.* Upon the Chancellor and Proctors Complaints to the King, (*E. II.*) that the Market of *Oxford* ran unreasonably high, so that poor Scholars could hardly live, the King sent down his *Mandate*, to regulate this Affair. But since the *Parliament* took the same Thing (with respect to the whole Nation) into Consideration, it will be better to give the Rates they thought fit to set upon Provisions, especially since there is no difference, or but a little, betwixt these two Accounts. Thus therefore Mr. *Stow* sets it down.

A stalled, or Corn-fed Ox, at \_\_\_\_\_

01 04 00

A Grass-fed Ox, \_\_\_\_\_

00 16 00

A fat stalled Cow, \_\_\_\_\_

00 12 00

An ordinary Cow, \_\_\_\_\_

00 10 00

A fat Mutton, unshorn (Corn-fed, the *Oxford Antiq.* say) \_\_\_\_\_

00 01 08

A fat Mutton, shorn, \_\_\_\_\_

00 01 02

A fat Hog of two Years old (the *Antiq.* say it should be *ovis bima*.

But, I think, the Price does not so well agree with that) at \_\_\_\_\_

00 03 04

A fat Goose, in the City, 3*d.* but every where else, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 02½

A fat Capon, in the City, 2*d.* ½. elsewhere at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 02

A fat Hen, in the City, 1*d.* ½. elsewhere, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01

2 Chickens, in the City 1*d.* ½. elsewhere, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01

4 Pigeons (in the City but three Pigeons) for \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01

24 Eggs (in the City but 20) for \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01

But, notwithstanding this *Act of Parliament*, Things could not be purchased at these Rates, for People would not bring them to Market (and that is a thing that Parliaments cannot remedy) and so the King was fain to revoke the former *Act*, and leave People to sell as they could (for a Trade will do as it can, and never be forced, one way or other) and (as *Walsingham* tells us, in 1315, and 1316,) the Price of Pease, and Beans, and of Wheat was, by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_

01 00 00

Malt, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 13 04

Salt, at \_\_\_\_\_

01 15 00

Nay, (by the Rains in Harvest) the Dearth was such, that Wheat came to 30, and 40*s.* the Quarter. And Good Ale was at the Gallon (*per Lagenam*, from whence the word *Flaggon*, which used heretofore to hold 4 Quarts, is derived) \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 02

The better sort, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 03

And the best of all, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 04

So that a Proclamation was fain to be issued out, that a *Lagena* of Ale, should be sold at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01

And that no Wheat should be malted (*imbrasiatum*), which the *Londoners* had usually done, to the great consumption of Corn, and sold it, at (the *Flaggon*) \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01½

And the viler Ale, at \_\_\_\_\_

00 00 01

In 1316. Wheat exceedingly dear (*Fabian*) at the Quarter, \_\_\_\_\_

01 12 00

In 1317. So great a scarcity of Corn, that at *Leicester*, on a Saturday, Wheat was sold at (*per Quarter*) \_\_\_\_\_

02 04 00

And the Friday following, at the same Place, at 14*s.* the Quarter.



So *H. Knyghton*; but there is a mistake in his saying, the Scarcity continued for two Years, and was general throughout all *England*. *Fabian* puts it this Year, \_\_\_\_\_

l.	s.	d.
02	13	04

And yet of this very Year 1317, *Stow* tells us, that the Harveſt was in ſo early, that all was houſed before *St. Giles's Day*, which is *September 1.* and Wheat, that was before at *IV l.* the Quarter, was now at *VI s. VIII d.* and Oats, that was before *III l. IV d.* now at *V s. IV d.* which makes what *Knyghton* ſays probable; for what he ſays, was but a decreaſe of *two thirds*: Whereas *Mr. Stow's* decreaſe is *eleven in twelve*.

In 1326. 1 *Ed. III.* at *Tunbridge* in *Kent*, *Inquiſitio unum Capitale Meſſuagium* LXX Acres of Arable Land, worth *per Ann.* XXXV s.

12 Hens, at _____	00	01	06
A Cock and thirteen Hens, at _____	00	01	07
8 Porkers and a half, at _____	00	15	00
80 Acres of Arable, at XX s. i. e. <i>per</i> Acre, _____	00	00	03
20 Acres of Paſture, each Acre at _____	00	00	01
14 Acres of Meadow, each at _____	00	00	04
18 Acres of Arable, each Acre at _____	00	00	03
27 Acres of Arable, each at _____	00	00	04
2 Acres of Meadow, each Acre at _____	00	00	10
A Cock, _____	00	00	01
3 Hens, _____	00	00	04½

*Mr. Lambard's Perambulation of Kent*, p. 541. You may ſee from hence, that you can make no certain Computation, from the Rates of Acres, becauſe of the difference of the Grounds.

In 1336. Such plenty of Corn, and ſcarcity of Money, that Wheat, was at *London*, by the Quarter, \_\_\_\_\_

00	02	00
00	06	08

A fat Ox at \_\_\_\_\_

So *H. Knyghton*, and *Fabian* adds,

For a fat Sheep *VI d.* and at moſt \_\_\_\_\_

00	00	08
----	----	----

6 Pigeons for \_\_\_\_\_

00	00	01
----	----	----

A fat Goole, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	00	02
----	----	----

A Pigg, \_\_\_\_\_

00	00	01
----	----	----

And ſays it was occaſioned by King *E. III.* gathering up all the Money he could get, to carry on his Wars, in *France* and *Scotland*.

In 1338. Wheat, the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	03	04
----	----	----

Barley, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	00	10
----	----	----

Peaſe and Beans, the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	01	00
----	----	----

Oats, the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	00	10
----	----	----

In 1339. Several Undertakers promiſe to deliver at the Town of *Berwick*, and in *Leith-Road*, 10000 Quarter of Wheat and Malt, each Quarter at \_\_\_\_\_

00	09	00
----	----	----

Oats, Beans, and Peaſe, each Quarter at \_\_\_\_\_

00	05	00
----	----	----

*Sir R. Cotton's Abridgm. Records.* This was a high Price.

In 1343. Two Oxen, Price of each, \_\_\_\_\_

00	08	00
----	----	----

In 1344. One Cow, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	05	00
----	----	----

*Dr. Kennet's Paroch. Antiq.*

In 1348. *H. Knyghton* ſays, that in the Peſtilence, Things were ſold almoſt for nothing. A Horſe worth 40 s. was ſold for \_\_\_\_\_

00	06	08
----	----	----

A good fat Ox, at \_\_\_\_\_

00	04	00
----	----	----

A Cow,



	l.	s.	d.
A Cow, at _____	00	01	00
An Heifer, or Steer, at _____	00	00	06
A fat Mutton, at _____	00	00	04
An Ewe, at _____	00	00	03
A Lamb, at _____	00	00	02
A Hogg, at _____	00	00	05
A Stone of Wool, at _____	00	00	09

The Historian says upon this Matter, *Erat leve precium cunctis, præ mortis timore*, p. 2599. they were not only afraid of the Cattles dying, but of their own, for, otherwise, *Wool* need not have been so cheap.

In 1349. Corn so plentiful, and other Provisions, that Wheat was, by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_

A fat Ox at *London*, for \_\_\_\_\_ 00 06 08

*Antiquit. Britann.*

In 1359. Wheat, very dear, a Quarter, at (*Fabian*) \_\_\_\_\_ 01 06 08

In 1361. Wheat so cheap, that a Quarter was at (*Monast. V. II.*) \_\_\_\_\_ 00 02 00

Two Hens for a \_\_\_\_\_ 00 00 01

In 1363. A Widow is to pay 4 Hens, or in Money, \_\_\_\_\_ 00 00 04

12 Hogs at XVIII<sup>s</sup>. each Hogg at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 01 06

*Dr. Kennet's Paroch. Antiq.*

Yet Wheat so dear, that *Walsingham* says a Quarter was at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 15 00

In 1369. *Walsingham* says there was such a Dearth, that Wheat was sold, by the Quarter, at 1<sup>l</sup>. 4<sup>s</sup>. according to *Stow*, \_\_\_\_\_ 01 00 00

Barly, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 16 04

Oats, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 08 00

In 1379. Wheat so cheap, that the Quarter was at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 04 00

White Wine was sold by the Gallon, for \_\_\_\_\_ 00 00 06

Red Wine by the Gallon, at (*Stow*) \_\_\_\_\_ 00 00 04

In 1382. A Tun of Wine not to exceed, (*Stow*) \_\_\_\_\_ 04 00 00

In 1387. Barley, at *Leicester*, sold by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 01 00

Wheat, by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 02 00

Barley, in the same Year, by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 02 00

Pease, by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 01 00

*Siliginis*, (which, what it is, I know not) per Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 01 00

In 1390. Wheat at *Leicester*, by the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 16 08  
and 14<sup>s</sup>. and 13<sup>s</sup>. 4<sup>d</sup>. And Wool was so cheap (by reason of a Law that forbad Men to carry it but to such and such Places, for Stranger-Merchants to fetch it, and might not export it themselves) that it was sold, by the Stone, at \_\_\_\_\_ 00 03 00

and at 2<sup>s</sup>. and at 1<sup>s</sup>. 8<sup>d</sup>. *H. Knyghton*, who lived at *Leicester*.

In 1401. Wheat very dear, the Quarter at (*Fabian*) \_\_\_\_\_ 00 16 00

In 1407. In a *Computus*, relating to the *Prior* and *Canons* of *Burcester, Oxf.* are found these following Particulars, to our present Purpose, which I have transcribed out of *Dr. Kennet's Parochial Antiquities*; which Book, if you will read it, will pay you for your Time and Pains; being full of many curious, learned, and useful Observations, in this way of Learning.

For a Cow, \_\_\_\_\_ 00 07 00

For the Calf of that Cow, \_\_\_\_\_ 00 01 08

For a Calf of a Cow that was somewhat weak, *debilis*, \_\_\_\_\_ 00 01 00

For



	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
For 5 Calves, (each at 2 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i> $\frac{1}{2}$ . very near)	00	10	08
For 5 Bushels and a half of Salt,	00	03	04 $\frac{1}{2}$
For a Cowele or Cooler, in Brewing,	00	00	09
For a Cow and her Calf,	00	07	06
For 2 Bushels of Wheat,	00	00	10
For a Man threshing for V Days,	00	00	10
For 2 Oxen,	01	06	08
For one Ox,	00	11	06
For a new Plow,	00	00	10
For 11 Bushels of Sowing-Wheat, (the Quarter near 4 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> $\frac{3}{4}$ .)	00	05	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
For 18 Bushels of Sowing-Oats, (the Quarter at 2 <i>s.</i> )	00	04	06
For a Dung-Cart, and all that belonged to it,	00	01	02
For a pair of Cart-wheels,	00	03	02
For R. P. working XII Days, (at 3 <i>d.</i> per Day)	00	03	00
For J. B. working one Day,	00	00	03
For a Calf,	00	01	07
In 1416. Wheat very dear, the Quarter at ( <i>Fabian</i> )	00	16	00
In 1423. Wheat cheap, the Quarter at ( <i>Fabian</i> )	00	08	00
Malt, at	00	05	00
Wheat at 8 <i>s.</i> the Quarter, was not, for those Times, <i>cheap</i> ; but it was cheap, with respect to some dear Years foregoing.			
A Ram, at	00	00	08
A Cheefe at	00	00	04
From such Articles as this last foregoing one, where neither <i>Weight</i> , nor <i>Goodness</i> is exprest, nothing can be concluded.			
In 1425. In another <i>Computus</i> of the <i>Prior</i> , and a <i>Canon</i> of <i>Burcester</i> , <i>Oxf.</i> in <i>Dr. Kennet's Par. Ant.</i>			
For a Colt fold,	00	08	00
For 10 Quarter of Pease, (each Quarter at 2 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> ) at	01	01	08
For 18 Quarter and 2 Bushel of Pease (about 3 <i>d.</i> $\frac{1}{8}$ . per Bushel) at	01	17	07
For 5 Ox-Hides,	00	12	00
For 2 Cow-Hides,	00	02	07
For 3 Cow-Hides,	00	04	08
For 16 Calve-Skins,	00	02	00
For 21 Lambs,	00	04	00
For 26 Sheep-Skins, of 2 Years old,	00	09	00
For 23 Tod of pure Wool, (at 9 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> the Tod)	10	18	06
For 19 Ells of Cloth for Napkins,	00	05	00
For 132 Flaggons and a half of Ale, at	00	04	10

I have observed before, that *Lagena* (a Flaggon) holds 4 Quarts. Now an 132 Flaggons must, at that Rate, make 528 Quarts, for which there was paid but 58 Pence: which will bring it to 9 Quarts a Penny, and 6 will remain besides. Now this cannot be allowed; there is therefore a Mistake, either in setting down the Number of the Flaggons, or of the Money paid for them. And such Mistakes are very easie. A Flaggon of Ale, or a Gallon, was (at or near this time) valued at 1*d.* or 1*d.*  $\frac{1}{4}$ . or 1*d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ . And if you compute at this last rate, and reckon XV*s.* instead of IV, it will come pretty near the Matter.



	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
For 32 Flaggons of Red Wine, at 8 <i>d.</i> the Flaggon, — —	01	01	04
For 3 Flaggons and 3 Quarts of Sweet Wine, at 1 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> the Flaggon, — — — —	00	05	00
This is a manifest Proof, that <i>Lagena</i> holds 4 Quarts; for if it had held 3, there had been 4 <i>Lagenæ</i> ; if it had held 2, there had been 4 <i>Lagenæ</i> and 1 Quart. A Quart came to 4 <i>d.</i>			
To <i>W. H.</i> a Stone-cutter, for 4 Days work (4 <i>d.</i> the Day,) —	00	01	04
To <i>J. C.</i> and 2 Servants, Tying for 4 Days (between 3 <i>d.</i> and 4 <i>d.</i> )	00	03	04
To 2 Sawyers working X Days (4 <i>d.</i> the Day) — — — —	00	06	08
For 20 Pullets, — — — — —	00	01	08
For a quarter of an Ox to falt, — — — — —	00	01	04
For a Cade of Red Herrings (720 the Cade) — — — —	00	08	00
For a Frail of Figgs, — — — — —	00	03	04
For 12 Pound of Raifins, — — — — —	00	01	01
For a great Flesh-Ax, — — — — —	00	01	04
For 2 Yards of Ruffet Cloth for the Shepherd, — — — —	00	02	02
For 4 Quarters of Wheat to be malted, (it is, <i>pro</i> 4 <i>quarteriis</i> <i>Fumenti pro Brasio faciendo</i> ) each Quarter at — — — —	00	16	00
For a Bay Horse, for the Prior's Stable, — — — — —	01	06	08
For 2 Colts, — — — — —	00	09	00
For 30 Pair of Autumnal (Winter) Gloves for the Servants, —	00	04	00
To the Baker's Servant for 10 Days, — — — — —	00	01	00
For threshing a Quarter of Wheat, — — — — —	00	00	03½
For 8 Woodcocks, for a Present, — — — — —	00	01	00
For 12 Pair of Gloves to the Bishop of <i>Worcester's</i> Servants, —	00	05	00
For one Man, plowing and harrowing 12 Days, — — — — —	00	01	00
<i>Vaccæ Pretium</i> , ( <i>Maddox Formul.</i> p. 144.) at — — — —	00	08	00
In 1426. 5 Oxen, each appraised at — — — — —	00	03	04
6 Cows, each at — — — — —	00	02	08
3 Horses, each at — — — — —	00	03	00
Sir <i>H. Spelman</i> , <i>Glossary V Graile</i> ,			
In 1434. The Autumn was so wet, that for almost two Years following, in many Places of the Kingdom, Wheat was sold, the Quarter, at — — — — —	01	06	03
And yet at the end of the Year following it came again to ( <i>Hist. Croyland Continuatio.</i> ) 5 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> therefore seems to have been the usual, common Price of a Quarter, about that time. — — — —			
In 1439. <i>Stow</i> says there was such scarcity, that Wheat was sold at 1 <i>l.</i> the Quarter. <i>Fabian</i> at — — — — —	01	06	08
In 1440. The Scarcity continued, Wheat was, the Quarter, at —	01	04	00
Malt, the Quarter, at — — — — —	00	13	00
Oats, the Quarter, — — — — —	00	05	04
Wine, by the Gallon, — — — — —	00	01	00
Bay-Salt, by the Bushel, — — — — —	00	01	00
If I am not misinformed, the Statutes of a College, that was founded much about the same Time with yours, say, that the weekly Allowance, for every <i>Fellow</i> , <i>Chaplain</i> , and <i>Scholar</i> , shall be, 1 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> and in Times of Scarcity, 1 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> and 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> But if Corn should be (and continue for 20 Days) above 2 <i>s.</i> the Bushel, then their Allowance shall be 1 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> the Week, and no farther. Wheat therefore at XVI <i>s.</i> the			



Quarter, must be accounted exceedingly dear. And yet in *Ann.* 1440, it was, at the lowest reckoning of Mr. *Stow*, at 20s. the Quarter. But, indeed, from that Year, to 1460, I have never found Wheat at above 8s. the Quarter, and therefore 2s. the Bushel might well be accounted a very high Price. And here, if it would avail me any thing, I might justly bemoan our want of History for these last two hundred and fifty Years, and upwards, (I mean of *Latin* Writers) there having been very few, that have transmitted any thing (as of their own Knowledge) of the Reigns of *H.* IV, V, VI. *Ed.* IV, V. *Rich.* III. except what Sir *Thomas More* has left us of the two last. But, as to the Purpose in hand, I have had the good Fortune to meet with the *Computus's* of nine or ten Years, that will exactly fit you, in this Inquiry, and they are of very great Credit, and shall go under the Name of *E. C.* but I will first give you an Account of the Price of Things, which I received from a private, but a very creditable hand, of the Year 1444.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
For 100 Quarters of Wheat, 21 <i>l.</i> 13 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> each Quarter at —	00	04	04
For 2 Bushels of Wheat, (I suppose for Seed) — —	00	01	00
For 2 Bushels of Pease (for Seed also) — —	00	01	00
For 5 Quarters of Pease, 15 <i>s.</i> each Quarter at — —	00	03	00
For 50 Quarters of Malt, 10 <i>l.</i> each Quarter at — —	00	04	00
For 6 Calves, 12 <i>s.</i> each Calf at — —	00	02	00
For 8 Porkers, 1 <i>l.</i> 4 <i>s.</i> each at — —	00	03	00
besides ( <i>i. e.</i> without) the Head.			
For 40 Geese, 10 <i>s.</i> each Goose at — —	00	00	03
For 31 Dozen of Pigeons, 10 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> each Dozen at about —	00	00	04½
For 15 Dozen of Pigeons, 7 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> each Dozen at — —	00	00	06
For 100 Dozen of Pigeons, each Dozen at — —	00	00	05½
For an Ox, — — — —	01	11	08
For 8 Cignets, or young Swans, each — —	00	03	00
For a Flich of Bacon, — — — —	00	01	08
For 4 Oxen, (young, I suppose, and lean) 52 <i>s.</i> each at — —	00	13	00
For 26 Warp of Ling, — — — —	01	10	04
For 100 Stock-Fish, — — — —	00	17	06
For a Barrel of Herrings, ( <i>i. e.</i> 30 Gallons fully packed) — —	01	00	00
For 2 Plough-Oxen, — — — —	01	03	00
For a Quarter of Oats, — — — —	00	01	08
For 3 Bushels of Green Pease, (for Seed) — —	00	02	03

At this Time it appears that Master Traders wrought by the Day for 3*d.* and their Labourers or Servants at 1*d.* But then, I believe, they had their Meat and Drink. The yearly Wages were, some 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* others 1*l.* For this, See hereafter, *Chap.* 5.

In 1445. 7 Quarter and an half of Wheat came to XXX*s.* which is, each Quarter, at — — — —

Oats, by the Quarter, at — — — —	00	04	06
12 Flaggon, or Gallons of Ale at 15 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> each Gallon at —	00	02	00
Hay, by the Load, — — — —	00	00	01½
For 3000 Red Herrings, — — — —	00	03	06½
For 3000 Red Herrings, — — — —	01	11	00
24 Bullocks and Heifers, 6 <i>l.</i> each Head at — —	00	05	00
Cloth for Surplices for Scholars, the Ell, at — —	00	00	08

And,



And, that you may not think this Cloth to be very coarfe, I assure you it was the same with the *Napkins* used at the *Altar*; and that, if you know the Religion of those Days, was certainly fine. *E. C.*

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
In 1447. Wheat, by the Quarter, <i>E. C.</i>	00	08	00
Oats, the Quarter,	00	02	01½
In 1448. Wheat, by the Quarter,	00	06	08
Oats, the Quarter,	00	02	00
A Cade of Red Herrings,	00	05	08
A Barrel of White Herrings, <i>E. C.</i>	00	09	03
In 1449. Wheat, by the Quarter, <i>E. C.</i>	00	05	00
A Cade of Red Herrings,	00	06	00
A Barrel of White Herrings,	00	10	03
15 Sheep, at 1 <i>l.</i> 16 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> each Sheep at (within ½.)	00	02	05½
7 Hogs, at 13 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> each Hog at (within ½.)	00	01	11½
In 1450. Oats, the Quarter,	00	01	10
Beans, the Quarter,	00	02	06
In 1451. Wheat, by the Quarter, at	00	08	00
Oats, the Quarter,	00	01	10¼
26 Gallons of Ale, (here the word <i>Galo</i> is used for <i>Lagena</i> ) at			
3 <i>s.</i> each Gallon at	00	00	01½
Beans, the Quarter,	00	03	04
For a Cade of Red Herrings,	00	07	04
For a Barrel of White Herrings, <i>E. C.</i>	00	13	07
In 1453. Wheat, by the Quarter,	00	05	04
Ale, <i>per</i> Gallon,	00	00	01¼
A Cade of Red Herrings,	00	07	06
80 White Herrings, <i>E. C.</i>	00	01	00
In 1454. Oats, by the Quarter,	00	01	10½
In 1455. Wheat, very cheap, the Quarter at	00	01	02
Malt, the Quarter, (Mr. <i>Stow</i> ) at	00	01	05
In 1457. Wheat, by the Quarter,	00	07	08
Oats, the Quarter,	00	01	09¼
A Gallon of Ale, at	00	00	01
A Cade of Red Herrings, at	00	06	08
92 White Herrings, <i>E. C.</i>	00	01	00

In 51 *H. III.* it was determined by *Authority*, that when a Quarter of Barley was sold at 2*s.* then *Ale* might be afforded 4 Quarts for 1*d.* And when Barley was at 2*s.* 6*d.* the Quarter, then *Ale* was to be 7 Quarts for 2*d.* and so to increase and decrease, after the Rate of 6*d.* the Quarter. But no Rules can always hold for Trade: as you may see, by comparing the Price of Barley and Ale, in these and other Accompts.

In 1459. Wheat, by the Quarter, at	00	05	00
Oats, the Quarter,	00	08	10
A Gallon of Ale, at	00	00	01
A Cade of Red Herrings, at	00	07	10½
92 White Herrings, at <i>E. C.</i>	00	01	00
In 1460. Wheat, the Quarter, at	00	08	00
Oats, the Quarter,	00	02	00
A Gallon of Ale, at,	00	00	01
A Cade of Red Herrings, at	00	07	00

192 White



192 White Herrings, at *E. C.*

l. s. d.  
00 02 00

Here my private Guide, for a while, leaves me; but not before it has made my Observation good, that from 1440, to 1460 (the Time you inquire after) Wheat was never above 8s. the Quarter, notwithstanding the Sword was drawn betwixt the Houses of *York*, and *Lancaster*, which usually cuts down Corn, as well as Men.

In 1463. It was enacted in Parliament, That no Corn should be imported, if Wheat were not above 6s. 8d. Rye 4s. Barley 3s. the Quarter; which signifies those Prices to be high.

In 1463. At *London*, Wheat was, by the Quarter

00 02 00

Barley, the Quarter,

00 01 10

Pease, the Quarter.

00 03 04

Oats, the Quarter,

00 01 02

At *Norfolk* the same Year, Wheat, the Quarter,

00 01 08

Barley

00 01 00

Malt,

00 01 08

Oats, Mr. *Stow*,

00 01 00

In 1464. White Wheat was sold by the Quarter, (Sir *R. Cotton's* Records.)

00 06 08

In 1475. Oats, the Quarter, at

00 01 10

A Load of Hay, at

00 06 08

This is from a *private Computus*, *P. C.*

In 1486. Wheat, very dear; and Bay-Salt the same Price. *Fabian.*

01 04 00

In 1489. Oats, the Quarter, *P. C.*

00 02 00

In 1491. Wheat, the Quarter, *Fabian.*

00 14 08

In 1493. Oats, the Quarter,

00 02 00

Beans, *P. C.*

00 03 04

In 1494. Wheat (cheap, and Bay-Salt the same) *Fabian.*

00 04 00

In 1495. Wheat, *Fabian.*

00 03 04

White Herrings, the Barrel, *Fabian.*

00 03 04

In 1497. Wheat (very dear) *Fabian.*

01 00 00

Oats, the Quarter, *P. C.*

00 02 00

In 1498. A Load of Hay, *P. C.*

00 08 02

Mr. *Stow* says Hay was usually at 5s. but now it was 10s. or 12s.

In 1499. Wheat, *per* Quarter,

00 04 00

Bay-Salt, the Quarter,

00 02 08

A Tun of *Gascoign* Wine, at, Mr. *Stow.*

02 00 00

It is not for want of Pains, that you have no fuller Accounts of these foregoing forty Years; for, I think, few publick Books have escaped my Diligence; and my private ones have proved as barren. And so it will be for the forty Years and more that follow; our *Chroniclers* wanted the Care and Observation of their Predecessors; and setting up for Politicians, quite neglected (as they thought them) lesser Matters. And, by a strange Fortune, I have read the *Computus's*, or Accompts, of a *Publick Body*, where there was always good House-keeping, and have not yet been able, for the Space of forty Years, to find what Price a Quarter of Wheat bore, though they spent a great many every Month. Your College-Books may supply these Wants, if you will now and then relax from Studies of more Attention, to inspect these

lighter



lighter Matters, which will not make you a less useful Member of your Society.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
In 1504. <i>Antiq. Canterb. Appendix</i> , p. 27. Wheat the Quarter, at	00	05	08
Red Wine, <i>per Dolium</i> , _____	04	00	00
Claret Wine, <i>per Dolium</i> , _____	03	13	04
White Wine, elect _____	03	06	08
Malvesy, a Butt, _____	04	00	00
Ale of London, <i>per Dolium</i> , _____	01	10	00
Ale of Canterbury, <i>per Dolium</i> , _____	01	05	00
Beer, <i>per Dolium</i> , _____	01	03	04
<i>Dolium</i> , I believe, does here signifie a <i>Pipe</i> , or <i>Butt</i> , which contains 126 Gallons. So that the Ale of London comes to very near 3 <i>d.</i> the Gallon. The Red Wine at 7 <i>d.</i> $\frac{1}{2}$ .			
In 1505. A Load of Hay, at _____	00	06	00
Oats, by the Quarter, at _____	00	03	00
In 1506. Oats, by the Quarter, at _____	00	02	00
Beans, the Quarter, at _____	00	03	08
In 1507. Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	02	00
Beans, the Quarter, _____	00	03	06
A Hoghead of Red Wine, _____	01	06	08
In 1508. Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	01	10
In 1510. Oats, _____	00	02	00
A Load of Hay, _____	00	09	00
In 1511. A Load of Hay, _____	00	05	00
Beans, the Quarter, _____	00	03	04
Oats, _____	00	02	00
In 1512. Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	02	00
Beans, _____	00	04	00
In 1513. Oats, _____	00	02	04
In 1515. Beans, <i>P. C.</i> _____	00	04	02
In 1521. A Dearth. Wheat was by the Quarter ( <i>Mr. Stow</i> ) _____	01	00	00
In 1526. Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	03	00
Beans, at _____	00	04	02
In 1530. Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	04	00
Beans, the Quarter, _____	00	05	04
In 1532. Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	02	08 $\frac{1}{4}$
Beans _____	00	05	04

In 1533. It will not be amiss, to insert a little Piece of History, out of honest *Mr. Stow*, to our present Purpose, under this present Year.

“ It was this Year enacted, That Butchers should sell their Beef, and Mutton, *by Weight* : Beef for a *Half-Penny* the Pound, and Mutton for *Three Farthings* : Which being devised for the great Commodity of the Realm (as it was thought) hath proved far otherwise. For at that time, (*i. e.* 1533.) fat Oxen were sold for 26 *s.* 8 *d.* fat Weathers for 3 *s.* 4 *d.* fat Calves of the like Price. A fat Lamb for 1 *s.* The Butchers of London sold Penny-Pieces of Beef, for the relief of the Poor ; every Piece two Pound and an half : sometimes three Pound for a Penny. And thirteen, sometimes fourteen of these Pieces for 1 *s.* Mutton 8 *d.* the Quarter. And an hundred Weight of Beef for 4 *s.* 8 *d.* What Price it hath grown to since, it needeth not to be set down. At this Time also, and not before, were Fo-



" reign Butchers permitted to sell their Flesh in *Leadon-Hall* Market of  
" *London*."

I suppose by *Foreign* Butchers; he means such as lived not, or had  
not served their Apprenticeship, in *London*.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
In 1535. Oats, by the Quarter, at	00	02	08
In 1537. Oats the Quarter,	00	03	04
Beans, the Quarter,	00	06	00
In 1543. Oats,	00	03	04
Beans,	00	06	08
In 1551. Wheat, by the Quarter,	00	08	00
Malt, at	00	05	01
2 Quarts of Malmsey,	00	00	08
Oats the Quarter,	00	08	00
A Load of Straw,	00	05	00
A Load of Coals,	00	12	00

Whenever you meet with *Coals*, in old Accounts, you are to under-  
stand thereby *Charcoal*, not *Seacoal*; which has not been in common  
use (as well as I can guess) one hundred and fifty Years; at least not in  
*London*: Though I find them, in *M. Paris* under the Name of *Carbo*  
*Marinus*, in the Time of *H. III.* in Additament.

In 1552. Barley, the Quarter,	00	05	00
In 1553. Wheat,	00	08	00
Malt,	00	05	00
A Tun of Wine,	05	00	00
Muscadel the Quart, at	00	00	06
Malvesy, the Quart,	00	00	05
Red Wine, the Quart,	00	00	03
In 1554. Wheat, the Quarter, at	00	08	00
Rye, the Quarter,	00	06	08
Malt, at	00	05	00
In 1555. Wheat, the Quarter, at	00	08	00
Rye, the Quarter,	00	06	00
Malt, the Quarter,	00	05	00
In 1556. Wheat, the Quarter,	00	08	00
Malt, the Quarter,	00	05	00
Beans, the Quarter,	00	06	08
In 1557. Wheat the Quarter,	00	08	00
Rye, the Quarter,	00	08	00
Malt, the Quarter,	00	05	00
Oats, the Quarter,	00	10	00
For threshing a Quarter of Wheat,	00	01	01
For threshing a Quarter of Rye,	00	00	10
For threshing a Quarter of Barley,	00	00	05
Mr. Stow says that in this Year, before Harvest, Wheat was, <i>per</i> Quarter,	02	13	04
Malt, <i>per</i> Quarter,	02	04	00
Beans and Rye, <i>per</i> Quarter,	02	00	00
Pease, <i>per</i> Quarter,	02	06	08
But after Harvest Wheat was at <i>London</i> , <i>per</i> Quarter,	00	05	00
Malt, <i>per</i> Quarter,	00	06	08
Rye, <i>per</i> Quarter,	00	03	04
			But



	l.	s.	d.
But in the Country Wheat was, <i>per</i> Quarter, _____	00	04	00
Malt <i>per</i> Quarter, _____	00	04	08
Rye, _____	00	02	08

So that a Penny-Wheat-Loaf, which before Harvest was 11 Ounces; was after Harvest 56 Ounces. My *Private Computus* takes no Notice of these *Advances* and *Falls*, to which I return, and shall only insert, now and then, what Mr. *Stow* says.

In 1558. Wheat, the Quarter, _____	00	08	00
Rye, _____	00	08	00
Barley, _____	00	05	00
A good Sheep; _____	00	02	10
In 1559. Wheat, _____	00	08	00
Rye, _____	00	08	00
In 1560. Wheat, _____	00	08	00
Rye, _____	00	08	00
Barley, at _____	00	05	02
For a Load of old Hay, _____	00	12	06
For a Load of (I suppose New) Hay, _____	00	06	08
Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	05	00
In 1561. Wheat, the Quarter, _____	00	08	00
Rye, _____	00	08	00
Malt, the Quarter, _____	00	05	00
Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	05	00
In 1562. Wheat, _____	00	08	00
Barley, _____	00	05	00
For a Load of Hay, _____	00	13	04
For a Load of Straw, _____	00	06	00
For a Hoghead of Claret-Wine, _____	02	10	00
In 1563. Rye, the Quarter, _____	00	13	04
Oats, the Quarter, _____	00	05	00

I would not have been weary of transcribing such Accounts as these, if I had judged the Knowledge of them, any thing to your Purpose; but I perceive the Way was now, and had been so for some Years before, as well as many that follow, to settle the Price of Corn betwixt the *Landlord* and *Tenant*, without regard to what it *truly* was. *Wheat* was generally fixed to 8 s. the Quarter, and *Malt* and *Oats* at 5. But finding it so for twenty, thirty, or forty Years together, you may reasonably conclude, that was not the true Market-Price, because it is not in the Nature of the Thing possible, that Corn should be so long at the same stand. But yet if you take Things for twenty Years together, it is likely that such a Price might be equal enough, betwixt the *Landlord* and the *Tenant*, and therefore well agreed upon. When, therefore, I have given you an Observation or two, of Mr. *Stow's*, relating to the Publick, I will shut up this long Chapter, with an Account of the Price of Corn for these last sixty Years, such as was indeed, the *real* Price, and not of *Composition* or *Agreement*; of which you are to make the best Use you can, in order to the Satisfaction you require.

In 1574. Such a Dearth at <i>London</i> , that Wheat was, the Quarter, _____	02	16	00
at _____	00	01	10
Beef (at <i>Lammas</i> ) so dear, that a Stone came to _____			And



	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
And 5 Herrings, (so dear)	00	00	02
Bay Salt (never so dear) the Bushel sold at	00	06	00
After Harvest Wheat was, the Quarter,	01	04	00
and so continued about a Year.			
In 1587. Wheat was, at <i>London</i> , by the Quarter,	03	04	00
and in other Places at 10 <i>s.</i> 12 <i>s.</i> and 13 <i>s.</i> the Bushel. This was occasioned by excessive Transportation.			
In 1594. Wheat, the Quarter, at	02	16	00
Rye,	02	00	00
In 1595. Wheat, (by much Transportation) the Quarter, at	02	13	04
A Hens Egg, at	00	00	01
Or, at best, 3 Eggs for	00	00	02
A Pound of sweet Butter,	00	00	07
Our Sins, (as Mr. <i>Stow</i> says) deserving it.			
In 1596. Wheat (by reason of great Rains) the Quarter, at	04	00	00
Rye,	02	08	00
Oat-meal, by the Bushel,	00	08	00
In 1597. Wheat fell from 5 <i>l.</i> 4 <i>s.</i> the Quarter, to	04	00	00
Rye, from 9 <i>s.</i> the Bushel to 6 <i>s.</i> and then to 3 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> and then rose again to the greatest Price. Bp. <i>Goodwin</i> in his <i>Annals</i> , 1557, says that in this Year 1597, Wheat was 13 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> the Bushel.			
In 1598. Pepper, so dear, that a Pound was sold at	00	08	00
Raisins, at	00	00	06
Gascoign Wine, the Gallon, at	00	02	08
Sweet-Wine, the Gallon, at	00	04	00

Now follows the Account, I promised you, of the true Market-Price of *Wheat*, and *Malt*, for sixty Years last past.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Wheat, Quarter.</i>			<i>Malt, Quarter.</i>		
1646	02	08	00	01	09	00
47	03	13	08	01	17	00
48	04	05	00	02	00	00
49	04	00	00	02	02	00
1650	03	16	08	01	18	06
51	03	13	04	01	09	00
52	02	09	06	01	08	00
53	01	15	06	01	08	00
54	01	06	00	01	00	08
55	01	13	04	01	00	00
56	02	03	00	01	04	00

*Years.*



<i>Years.</i>	<i>Wheat, Quarter.</i>			<i>Malt, Quarter.</i>		
1657	02	06	08	01	08	04
58	03	05	00	01	09	04
59	03	06	00	02	08	08
1660	02	16	06	01	12	08
61	03	10	00	01	13	04
62	03	14	00	02	02	00
63	02	17	00	01	12	08
64	02	00	06	01	10	00
65	02	09	04	01	08	04
66	01	16	00	01	06	00
67	01	16	00	01	02	08
68	02	00	00	01	04	00
69	02	04	04	01	07	04
1670	02	01	08	01	06	06
71	02	02	00	01	05	04
1672	02	01	00	01	02	00
73	02	06	08	01	04	00
74	03	08	08	01	14	00
75	03	04	08	01	14	00
76	01	18	00	01	06	00
77	02	02	00	01	08	00
78	02	19	00	01	08	08
79	03	00	00	01	06	08
1680	02	05	00	01	02	08
81	02	06	08	01	04	08
82	02	04	00	01	08	00
83	02	00	00	01	08	08



<i>Years.</i>	<i>Wheat, Quarter.</i>			<i>Malt, Quarter.</i>		
84	02	04	00	01	05	04
85	02	06	08	01	08	00
86	01	14	00	01	05	04
1687	01	05	02	01	04	00
88	02	06	00	01	02	00
89	01	10	00	01	00	00
1690	01	14	08	00	19	04
91	01	14	00	00	17	04
92	02	06	08	01	04	04
93	03	07	08	01	10	00
94	03	04	00	01	12	00
95	02	13	00	01	12	00
96	03	11	00	01	08	00
97	03	00	00	01	08	00
98	03	08	04	01	12	00
99	03	04	00	01	19	04
1700	02	00	00	01	11	04
1701	01	17	08	01	04	00
1702	01	09	06	01	08	00
1703	01	16	00	01	03	04
1704	02	06	06	01	08	00
1705	01	10	00	01	06	00

In this Computation, you are to know, that in every Year there are two Prices of Corn, the one of *Lady-day*, the other of *Michaelmas*; both which I put together, and take the half, for the common Price of that whole Year. Of the first twenty Years of these last sixty, the common Price of Wheat was 2*l.* 17*s.* 5*d.*  $\frac{1}{4}$ . the Quarter.

Malt was 1*l.* 12*s.* 00*d.*  $\frac{3}{4}$ . the Quarter.

The



The common Price of the second Score of Years was,

Wheat at 2*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.*  $\frac{3}{4}$ . the Quarter.

Malt at 1*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.*  $\frac{3}{4}$ . the Quarter.

The common Price for these last twenty Years past was,

Wheat at 2*l.* 5*s.* 9*d.*  $\frac{3}{4}$ . the Quarter.

Malt at 1*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.*  $\frac{1}{4}$ . the Quarter,

From whence it appears, that, one Year with another, for these last sixty, Wheat has been, the Quarter, at \_\_\_\_\_

And Malt (abating the Fractions) at \_\_\_\_\_

Which is, 6*s.* 2*d.* ob. *q.* the Bushel of Wheat, and 3*s.* 5*d.* *q.* the Bushel of Malt, and somewhat above.

Though I ought to acquaint the Reader, that the Market I have computed by, is somewhat higher than those at a very great distance from *London*; in which, if we allow Wheat to have been at 40*s.* and Malt at 24*s.* the Quarter, we shall come nearer to the Truth, in general.

<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
02	09	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
01	07	07 $\frac{1}{4}$

## CHAP. V.

### *Of Stipends, Salaries, Wages, Jointures, Portions, Day-labour, &c.*

**I**N the Council held at *Oxford*, 1222. It was decreed, That where the Churches had no greater Revenues than V Marks *per Ann.* they should be conferred on none, but such as should constantly reside in Person, on the Place. *Spelman, Conc. Angl. Tom. II.*

A single Priest might therefore subsist on V Marks, but he could not afford to keep a Curate.

Accordingly *Ste. Langton*, A. B. Cant. in the same Year decrees, That the Perpetual Vicar shall have V Marks assigned him, *i. e.* as much as may be farmed out for V Marks. Except in *Wales*, where by reason of the smallness of the Livings (and plenty, I suppose, of Provisions) the Vicars are contented with less Stipends. *Ibid.*

In 1287. *Peter Quivil*, B. of *Exon*, in *Synodo Exoniensi*, decrees, That in every Parochial Church, the Perpetual Vicarage should be endowed with at least V Marks *per Ann.* that he may, in some Measure, keep Hospitality; and in case he grow old, sickly, or impotent, may be thereby sustained. This must be done, if the Living be really worth XL Marks *per Ann.* But if it be of better value, the Vicar's Portion must be increased.

And as for a Curate (whom he here calls (a) *Parochialis Sacerdos*) he decrees the Rector shall pay him 40*s.* *per Ann.* for his Stipend: and says, if the Rectors think themselves aggrieved by this, they may do their Work themselves, and save that Money. He also mentions *Sacerdotes Auxiliarii*, (b) and decrees, that they shall have 50*s.* *per Ann.* at least; and if they have agreed for less (c), such Agreement to be void. *Concil. Angl.*

(a) I should have thought, that *Sacerdos* (joined especially with *Parochialis*) should have signified a Parish-Priest, Rector, or Vicar, as distinguished from his *Capellanus*, or Curate; but he seems to be here, a mere Stipendiary Curate, and removable, whenever the Rector will do his Business himself. (b) Why an Auxiliary, or Assistant-Priest, should have 50*s.* *per Ann.* when the Curate had but 40, I cannot see: But there



there is very good Reason, why such under-hand Bargains (*c*) should be made void, which were so much to the Prejudice of poor Curates. And therefore (before this *Constitution*) in 1253. among the *Articles of Inquiry*, for all the Dioceses of *England*, one was, Whether any *Rectors* had made a Bargain with their *Curates*, that, besides the Stipends they received from the *Rectors*, they might receive from others, *Annualia*, et *Tricennalia*; because this permitting of the Curate to be a *Mass Priest*, and to perform *Annualia et Tricennalia*, was to save the Rector from giving so fair and reasonable a Stipend, as he ought. *Annal. Burton*, in 1253. Note, That *Annualia* were such Oblations, as were made by the Relations of the Deceased, upon the Day the Party died, every Year: which Day, our Fathers called the *Years-Day*, or *Years Mind*, and, upon it, *Mass* was celebrated with great solemnity, by one of the most considerable Clergymen that could be procured, according to the Quality of the Deceased. *Tricennalia* were called *Trentals*, from *Trigintalia*, and in *English*, a *Months-Mind*, because the Service lasted a Month, or thirty Days, in which they said so many Masses. As M. Du Fresne observes on the word *Tricenarium*, *Officium XXX Missarum, quod totidem diebus peragitur, pro Defunctis, vel Obventiones quæ obveniunt Sacerdotibus, ratione ejusdem Officii*.

In 1289. *Gilb. Cicestr.* decrees, the Curates, in poor Churches, must have V Marks for their Stipend; in richer Churches, they must have more.

In 1306. *W. Grenefeld*, A. B. *Ebor.* decrees the same thing, *Concil. Angl.*

In 1308. *Rob. de Winchelsea*, A. B. *Cant.* decrees, that no Curate shall serve under 5 Marks per Ann. *Idem, ibid.*

In 1348. *H. Knyghton* says, that the great Pestilence had swept away so many Priests, among other People, that a *Chaplain* could hardly be gotten to serve a Church, under 10 Marks, or 10 Pounds per Ann. whereas before, they might be had at 5 or 4 Marks, nay at 2, together with their Diet: and Men would hardly accept of a *Vicarage* of 20 Marks or 20 l. per Ann. p. 2600. This I suppose was, because *Vicars* were thought to be obliged to stricter Residence, which, in Pestilential Seasons, was, doubtless, hazardous.

In 1360. *J. Thoresby*, A. B. *York*, decrees the same thing with his Predecessor *Grenefeld* in 1306. *Concil. Ang. V. 2.*

In 1362. *Simon Iselip*, A. B. *Cant.* decrees, that Chaplains *Annalia Celebrantes*, and having no Cure of Souls, shall be content with 5 Marks per Ann. and they who have Cure of Souls, with 6 Marks, unless the Diocesan, for good Cause, shall order more. But Mr. *Stow* observes upon it, that it occasioned many of them to turn Robbers. p. 265.

The same A. B. the Month after, complains that the Priests grew wanton, and were not content with reasonable Stipends, for serving *Parish Cures*; but went about, rather chusing to say Masses, for the Living and the Dead, and get what they could that way, than fix in any certain Place: and therefore orders and appoints the same Salaries above-named; and if any One took any more, under any Pretence whatever, they should be punished. *Concil. Angl.* This had been highly unreasonable, unless 5 or 6 Marks had been, at that Time, thought a sufficient Maintenance for a single Person. And so accordingly about that Time we find it was the usual Salary.

In 1371. *In Stipendiis unius Capellani*, 02 l. 13 s. 4 d. *Burton Ant. Leicest.* 87.

In 1378. *Simon Sudbury*, A. B. *Cant.* repeats the Decrees of his Predecessor *Simon Iselip*, and makes the same Complaints. And decrees, that every such unfixed *Mass-Priest*, should content himself with 7 Marks per Ann. either all in Money; or with Diet and 3 Marks in Money. And he that takes a Cure, to content himself with 8 Marks, or with 4 Marks and his Diet. And all this, under Pain of Excommunication. *Concil. Angl.*

This



This Matter seemed to be of such importance, that the Parliament, in 39 E. III. made Rules about it; in these Terms, c. 8. "If any Secular Man of the Realm, pay any more than 5 Marks, to any Priest yearly, in Money, or in other Things; to the value; or if he pay to such Priest retained to abide at his Table, above two Marks for his Gown, and his other Necessaries, (his Table accounted to 40 Shillings) and thereof be attained, He shall pay to the King, fully as much as he paid to the said Priest." And this was renewed in 1414, 2 H. V. St. II. c. 2. in the following manner.

"No yearly Chaplain, within the Realm, shall take, from henceforth, more for his whole Wages, by Year (that is to say, for his Board, Apparel, and other Necessaries) but 7 Marks. Nor the Parish-Priests which be, or shall be retained to serve Cures, shall take, from henceforth, for their whole Wages, by Year (that is to say, for the Things aforesaid) but 8 Marks: unless it be by Licence of the Ordinary. So that the whole Summ pass not 9 Marks." And in 27 H. VI. a Pardon was passed for such Priests as had offended against these Acts.

In 1421. H. Chicheley, A. B. Cant. at the very importunate Instance of his Clergy, in Convocation, does, with the Consent and Advice of his Suffragans, confirm and ratify the Decree of his Predecessor, S. Sudbury in 1378, repeating the very Words of it. *Idem, ibid.*

And in 1439, (which is very near to the Time you are inquiring after) the same A. B. Chicheley, in Convocation also, decrees, That Vicarages should be augmented (by the Rectors, or Appropriators) to 12 Marks per Ann. if the whole Benefice be worth so much, to support the Burthens incident to Vicarages. *Idem, ibid.*

Vicarages were at first, free from all Incumbrances and Burthens; but by the Artifice of the Monks, and Religious, the Favour they found at Rome, the Compliance of the Bishops, and by other Means, they came, by degrees, to bear almost equal Charges with the Rectors, though much less able to do it. And therefore, though it was very well, and wisely done by this Archbishop to augment Vicarages to 12 Marks, yet considering the Charges and Burthens incident to Vicarages, they were not much advantaged by it; for a Vicarage of 12 Marks, with its Burthens, may not be so good as a Curacy with 7 or 8 Marks, without Incumbrance.

And therefore, even in 1439, (which is very near to the Time of the Foundation of your College) a single Man was thought to be provided for, by a Stipend of 8 Marks, which is but 6s. 8d. above the Summ you are inquiring about. You may therefore very reasonably conclude, that, about that Time, a single Man might live cleanly and decently, with good Management, with 5l. per Ann. because it is not to be presumed, that an Archbishop, at the Head of his Clergy, and at their Request too, should decree such an Allowance for officiating Clergymen, as would not keep them (if vertuous Men and sober) decently and cleanly.

Let us see also, a little, to the Allowance of Chantry-Priests, and such like.

In 1237. H. III. gives 8l. out of the Exchequer for three Chaplains, to do Duty daily in the Temple-Church, London, which is 4 Marks per Ann. each. In *Monasticon Angl.* V. II. p. 521.

In 1242. Alexander B. Cov. and Lichf. erected an Office of Chanter in that Church, and allowed for his Salary 6l. 10s. *Ang. Sac. P. I.* p. 446.

In 1313. E. II. ordained and commanded, that his Chapel of St. Edward, in the Castle of Windsor, should be kept and served in the manner following.

First, To the Honour of God, of our Lady, and St. Edward, for him and his Ancestors, it is ordained there be four Chaplains, who shall be Men of good Condition, and Discreet; of which one shall be Head-Chaplain of the Chapel; and the other three shall be his Seconds, or Assistants.



2. Also two *Clerks*, of good Condition, and that chant well, and in all Points attendant on the Head-Chaplain, and on the others, as oft as there shall be occasion for the Service of the Chapel.

3. Each of the aforesaid Chaplains, shall sing Mass every Day, without some good Cause to the contrary; so that every Morning there be two Masses, by *Note*, the one of our Lady, the other of the Day: the other two of *Requiem*, for the Souls of the Ancestors of our Lord the King.

4. The Head-Chaplain, to defray his whole Expence, is to receive 10 Marks per Ann. Each of the other Three an Cs. the two Clerks, each of them Ls.

5. And the King's *Chancellor*, whoever he be, because he is the Head of the King's Chapel, shall make, once every Year, a Journey thither, if he can be dispensed with by the King, to see that the said Chapel be served with Ornaments, Library, and Chantry, in the above-appointed manner; and make out his Breve de *Liberate*, for the said Ministers, to be paid their Wages, duly, twice a Year.

6. And if any of the above-said six Chaplains, or Clerks shall die, or be removed, the said Chancellor shall put a sufficient Person in his Place. The Title of this Record is, *De Providentiis pro Capella Windesore*: and it is in Mr. Rymer's 3d Vol. of *Fœdera*, &c.

It appears (5.) that the *Chancellor* was the Head of the King's Chapel; and in the Life of *Thomas Becket* (Chancellor to H. II.) written by one who lived at the same Time with him, that it was part of the Chancellor's Office, *ut Capella Regia, illius sit dispositione & Cura*. This seems to be the Reason of the Lord Chancellor's being (although no Clergyman) the Visitor of the College of Dean and Canons of St. George in *Windſor Caſtle*, founded by Ed. III. his Son, which is the King's Free Chapel, who was also born at that Place, of which there is this *Memorandum*, in the same Vol. III. 1312. which, it will not be much out of my Way, to transcribe in this Place.

“ *Memorand. Ifabella the Queen* was brought to Bed, in *Windſor Caſtle*, on Monday the next after the Feast of St. *Martin*, in Winter, in the Year of Grace 1312, the 6 E. II. of her first-born Son; and in St. *Edward's Chapel* in the same Caſtle, he was christened the Thursday following, by the Cardinal St. *Priscæ*. His God-fathers were *A. Piſtavienſis* Chamberlain to the Pope; *J.* Bishop of *Bath and Wells*; *W.* Bishop of *Worceſter*; *Lewis Count d' Eureux*; *John of Brittany* Earl of *Richmond*; *Aymary de Valence* E. of *Pembrook*, and *Hugh le Deſpenſer*.”

In 1315. Two Chanters were appointed in the Church of *Lichfield*, and had, each for his Salary 5 l. 15 s. *Angl. Sac. P. I.*

In 1332. *Elizabeth de Burgh* makes an Agreement with the *Prior* and *Convent* of *Angleſey* in *Cambridgſhire* for 20 l. per Ann. which she gives that two Chaplains shall be maintained, with each a convenient *Manſe*, or Dwelling-house, and Diet, and 20 s. for Robes and other Neceſſaries: or else to allow them 12 Marks, to find themselves in all Things; unless the *Prior* and *Convent* can agree with them for less. And in 1335, she discharges the *Prior* and *Convent* of one of those Chaplains, upon their paying to *Rob. de Spalding*, an Annual Pension of an Cs. and gives them moreover a Rent-Charge of 11 s. 11 d. *Monast. Vol. II. p. 259.*

These Chaplains therefore were thought able to live, each upon 6 Marks, *i. e.* 4 l. per Ann.

Between 1345, and 1381, *Thom. of Hatfield*, Bishop of *Durham*, founded a College for eight Monks, and seven young Men, to study the Liberal Sciences; and allowed to each Monk 4 l. and to each Student 5 Marks. *Angl. Sacra.*

In 1350. Two Priests, to officiate alternately, during the whole Year, every Day, at the Church of *Sherifhoton* in the Diocese of *York*; to pray for the Souls of *R. Nevil*, Lord *Raby*, &c. for 7 Marks between them. In Mr. *Maddox's Formulæ*, p. 450.

In



In 1373, The Master of the Hospital of *Fosse-gate* in *Yorkshire* is to be a Clergyman, of good Fame and Discretion; and is to have for his whole Maintenance, the Summ of 10 *Marks per Ann.* And if the Revenues increafe upon his Management, he is to get another Chaplain to assist him, who, for his Pains, is to have 7 *Marks per Ann.* And they must, both of them, constantly *reside*, and constantly *officiate*, on the Place. *Monast.* Vol. III. p. 99.

In 1400. *John Plumtree* of *Nottingham*, erected two Chauntries, with two Chaplains to attend daily: to each of whom he allowed an *Cs.* or 5 *l. per Ann.* *Monast.* Vol. II. p. 448.

In 1408. *Fabian* sets it down, that the Stipend of a Mass-Priest, was 7 *Marks.*

And, not to multiply Instances of this kind, of which you cannot fail of meeting many, in all our Histories; There is a *College* in the *University* of *Cambridge*, founded about the Year 1450, in which the statutable Allowance of each *Fellow*, is 5 *l. per Ann.* to find him in Diet, Clothes, and all other Necessaries.

You must now be content with *Miscellanies*, the order of Time however being observed.

Betwixt 871, and 900, King *Alfred* left by Will, to each of his Daughters, an *Hundred Pounds* in Money. Mr. *Cambden* (in his *Remains*) says 400 *l.* But it appears by the *Will*, printed at the end of *Alfred's* Life at *Oxford*, that the 400 *l.* was divided betwixt his three Daughters, and one *Alfwith*: But the Reader must not think that this was the *whole* of their Portion, for he had settled *Lands* on each of them before, but this was all he left them in Money.

In 1087. When *W. Rufus* came to inquire into the Treasure his Father had laid up, at *Winchester*, he found it by weight 60000 *l.* of Silver, besides Gold and Jewels. He gave by his Father's Order, and for the good of his Soul, to each *Great Church*, (*i. e.* Abbey, Convent, or Cathedral) 10 *Marks.* To each *less one* 5 *Marks*, to every *Parish-Church* 5 *s.* and to the *Poor* of every *County* an *Cl.* Thus *Ingulfus*, who lived at the same Time.

In 1101. The Composition betwixt *H. I.* and *Robert* his elder Brother, was, that *Robert* should have 3000 *l. per Ann.* in Weight. *Pet. Blæfens. Contin.* The Words, in *Weight*, are put in, to signifie that the Money should not be clipped; for a Pound by *Tale* was at this Time, and long after, most certainly a Pound in *Weight*.

In 1135. When King *Stephen* was crowned, he seized the Treasure which *H. I.* had left, which came to 100000 *l.* besides Gold and Silver Vessels, with other Jewels inestimable. *Tho. Rudborn, Hist. Winton.* p. 284.

In 1193. The Ransom of *R. I.* was an 100000 *Marks* in Silver. *Rad. de Diceto*, says they were *Pounds*. But Mr. *Rymer's* Volumes are of greater Authority, than any private Writer's Works, being made up of *Records*.

In 1201. King *John* agreed to pay *Berengaria*, the Dowager Queen of *R. I.* a 1000 *Marks per Ann.* for her Dowry, which he increased, in 1215, to a 1000 *Pounds per Ann.* Mr. *Rymer*, in *Anno*.

In 1207. *Amph. Till*, being taken Prisoner by King *John*, was put to Ransom, at 10000 *Marks*, in part of which he is to pay 10 Horses, at the rate of 30 *Marks* a-piece, or in lieu of them 300 *Marks*. Who this Man was, I cannot find, but his Horses were certainly as high-priced as they could well be.

In 1221. *Joan*, eldest Daughter to King *John*, married to *Alexander* King of *Scotland*, had a Dowry of 1000 *l. per Ann.* *Rymer*.

In 1226. *H. III.* confirms the Dowry of *Isabella* his Mother, and says it was the same that *Elianor* his Grandmother had, and makes the same to *Elianor* his own Wife, the Earl of *Provence's* Daughter, in 1235, with whom he was to have 20000 *Marks* for Portion. But the *private Instructions* were, to accept of 15000, or 10000, or 7000,



7000, or 5000, or 3000. Nay, she was to be brought away, though they could get nothing at all with her. *Rymer.*

In 1236. *Ifabella*, Sister to *H. III.* was contracted to the Emperor *Frederic*, with 30000 Marks. *Idem.*

In 1254. *Edward*, the Son of *H. III.* promises a Dowry of 1000 *l. per Ann.* to *Elienor* the King of *Castile's* Daughter, whilst he is Prince; but says, when she comes to be Queen, he will add 500 Marks *per Ann.* more. And upon this Marriage, *H. III.* settles 15000 Marks *per Ann.* on the Prince. *Idem.*

In 1278. *E. I.* gives, with his Daughter *Joan*, contracted to *Hartman*, Son to the King of the *Romans*, 10000 Marks Sterling; which are to be returned in case that *Hartman* die before her, together with what Presents the said Husband shall ever make to her. *Idem.*

In 1294, *E. I.* took into his hands, all the Estates of the *Priories-alien*, allowing to every Monk 1s. 6d. *per Week*, which comes to, 3 *l.* 18s. by the Year. And therefore, I suppose, a Monk might live tolerably well on that Allowance. For the King was not angry with the Monks; but these *Priories* were *Cells* to Monasteries in *France*, (with which Nation the King was now at open War) and whatever Surplusage there was, after the Charges of the *Cells* at Home were defraided, it was sent to the Monasteries, or principal Houses abroad; which was indeed feeding the King's Enemies,

In 1299. *Ed. I.* contracts with *Margaret* Daughter to the King of *France*: 18000 *l. Turonens.* (four of which make one Pound Sterling) being agreed upon for her Dowry. This in *English* Money came to 4500 *l. per Ann.* But in 1315, he increased it to 5000 *l. per Ann.* *Rymer.*

In 1301. The Widow of *Edmund* Earl of *Cornwal* (Son to the King of the *Romans*, and Nephew to *H. III.*) was, at the request of several Lords in Parliament, endowed with a Jointure of 500 *l. per Ann.* by *E. I.* *Tho. Walsingham.*

In 1302. *E. I.* promises, to *Ifabella* Daughter to the King of *France*, contracted to his Son *Edward*, 4500 *l. per Ann.* *Rymer.*

In 1306. *E. I.* leaves to his Son *Thomas* 10000 Marks, to his Son *Edmund* 7000 Marks *per Ann.* and to *Eleanor* his Daughter for her Portion 10000 Marks, and 5000 to buy her Apparel. *Idem.*

In 1307. *E. II.* confirms the Grant his Father *E. I.* had made to his Sister *Mary* a Nun at *Ambrosbury*, of 200 *l. per Ann.* 40 Oak-Trees for firing in her Chamber, and 20 *Dolia* (or Hogheads) of Wine, as long as she continued in the Nunnery, and lived in *England*. And the Reader will not, I believe, be displeased, to see the Care that was taken in those Days, for the Sustainment of the Daughter and the Sister of a King of *England*, in 1313. *Rymer.*

*The King, to the Sheriff of Wiltes, Greeting.*

“ F O R as much as we are indebted to our dearest Sister *Mary*, a Nun of *Ambrosbury*, in the Summ of 12 *l.* 7s. 3d. as well for Hay, Oats, Litter, and Shooing, as for her Servants Wages, whilst she tarried at *Windsor*, in the Month of December last past, as also for her Expences in travailling from *Windsor* to *Ambrosbury*, as in a Bill of our *Wardrobe*, delivered by our Sister into our Chancery, appears more at large.—We willing to satisfy our Sister, in this Particular, with all the speed we may, Do hereby command you to pay to our said Sister, or her lawful Attorney, the said Summe, out of the Issues of your Bailifry, without delay; and We, in your Accounts at our Exchequer, shall make all due Allowance for the same.

*Witnesse the King, at Windsor, Jan. the 1st.*

*By a Bill of the Wardrobe.*



In 1309. The Pensions allowed by the King to the *Cardinals*, and *great Officers* of the *Pope*, who were, as it were, retained by the Court of *England*, were, to some, an 100, but to most of them 50 *Marks per Ann.*

In 1310. *William de Morene* of *Saunford*, Kt. being taken Prisoner by the *Scots*, had allowed him by *E. II.* for his Wages, 4*d.* the Day; and for his Robe, 20*s.* the Year. The better sort of Prisoners had 3*d.* ordinary ones 2*d.* the Day.

In this same Year, *A Man at Arms* was allowed 10*d.* a *Balistarius* (a Crosse-bow-man) 3*d.* an Archer or Bow-man, 2*d.* the Day. And the Price the King paid for a *Balista*, was 3*s.* 8*d.* *Mr. Rymer's Collections in Annis.*

In 1311. When the Order of *Knights-Templars* was to be destroyed, their Persons imprisoned, and their Estates confiscated; many of their Servants, Chaplains, and Dependants, were, to be sure, utterly destitute and undone: The King, *E. II.* thought himself obliged to make some Provision for them. Some of the *Knights* were committed to Monasteries, there to do Penance for their Offences; and to them the King allowed 4*d.* a Day, which seems to have been their usual Allowance, because in the *Mandate* to the Bishop of *Bath* and *Wells* to make this Allowance to four Knights, it is there said, *Sicut prius percipere consueverunt.* To the *Great Master*, *William de la More*, 2*s.* To several of their *Chaplains*, the King allows (as the Knights did formerly) 3*d.* a Day, for their Diet, and 20*s.* for their Stipend, which is, by the Year, 6*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.* To other Servants 2*d.* and to inferior ones 1*d.* and 5, or 10*s.* for their Stipend, or Livery. And for this, they were to do the same Service, they had done to the Knights, whilst the Lands were in their keeping. *Rymer's Collection.*

In 1314. *Elizabeth*, Wife of *Robert Bruce* (King of *Scotland*) being Prisoner in *England*, is allowed, for herself and Family, 20*s.* by the Week. To *Rob. Wychard* Bishop of *Glasgow*, and *William de Lamberton* Bishop of *St. Andrews*, Prisoners, is allowed, each of them 6*d.* a Day, to a *Valet* 3*d.* to a *Chaplain* 1*d.* ob. and to their ordinary Servants 1*d.* ob. *Idem.*

In 1316. *Ed. II.* gives to *Theophania*, a *French Lady*, a yearly Estate of 500*l.* for ever, because she had been Nurse to *Isabella* his Queen. *Idem.*

In 1330. *Joan* of *Oxford*, Nurse to the *Black Prince*, had a Pension of 10*l.* per *Ann.* and *Maud Plumpton* a *Rocker* had 10 *Marks.* *Dr. Kennet Paroch. Antiq.*

In 1326. *Edward II.* being deposed, had an 100 *Marks* by the Month allowed to maintain him; which is at the rate of 800*l.* per *Ann.* *Walsingham.*

In 1495. When the Lady *Anne*, Daughter to *Ed. IV.* and Sister to Queen *Elizabeth*, Wife of *H. VII.* was married to *Tho. Lord Haward*, eldest Son to the Earl of *Surry*, it was agreed, that she should be allowed, for her Sustentation, and convenient Diet of Meat and Drink, 20*s.* by the Week. And for two Gentlewomen, a Woman Child (*i. e.* a Servant) a Gentleman, a Yeoman, and three Grooms, (in all eight People) 51*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* by the Year. And for Sustentation of seven Horses, 16*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.* *i. e.* for each Horse, 2*l.* 7*s.* 0*d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ . *M. Maddox Formul. p. 109.*

In 1091. All the Men of *Croyland*, that will have any Turfe out of the *Abbot's Marsh*, must either work a Days-work, or give Three Half-Pence for one to cut Turfes for *Croyland-Court.* *Ingulfus.*

The Serjeant of the Infirmary, shall, for his looking after the Sick, receive for his Reward (if the Party die) a Coat, or 4*s.* and every one that watched with the Deceased, shall have 2*d.* for every Night. *Idem ibid.*

A Coat is reasonably valued at 4*s.* but 2*d.* a Night, for watching, was an extraordinary Recompence. This Serjeant of the Infirmary was to have his Livery of Meat, Drink, and Bread, and 4*s.* per *Ann.* for Stipend. *Idem.*



In 1225. *Magna Charta*, C. 22. No Sheriff or Bailly of ours, shall take the Horses, and Carts of any Man for Carriage, except he pay the old Price limited *i. e.* for Carriage with two Horses 10*d.* by the Day: and for three Horses 14*d.*

In *Antiq. Constitut. Admiralitatis* (but of what Age appears not) it is thus appointed. *Si l' Admiral soit Bachelier, il prendra la jour, pour lui meme, sur la Mer, IVs. Si soit Baron, VIIs. VIIId. & s' il soit Count, XIIIIs. IVd. Bachelier, is here, a Knight. And I guess, as well by the Language, as the Wages, that this Constitution is not very ancient. S. H. Spelman, in V. Admiral.*

In 1329. Also they shall harrow for three Days, or shall pay three Pence, *i. e.* a Penny for a Days-work. It must not however, I think, be always concluded, from such Passages as these, that Men worked for a Penny by the Day: because it seems to have been the Custom, in some Places, for some sort of *Holders*, to be obliged to perform such and such Works, for the Chief Lord, at such and such a Price. So in the word *Sesonis*, in *S. H. Spelman's Glossary. Extenta Manerii de Garinges. He is to work a Days-work, every Week, from Michaelmas, to the first of August, and for it, he is to receive for each Day, Three-Farthings. And from the first of August to Michaelmas, he is to receive a Penny-Half-Penny; excepting the Winter-Season. Excepta Seseone hiemali.* See also the word *Lanceta*, where you will find much such another Custom.

In 1293. The *Parcarii* of the *Earl of Cornwall*, were to have two Meals, or 2*d.* by the Day, but the *Earl* would needs have 3*d.* which the Inhabitants complain of. *Sir H. Spelman, in V Putura.*

I will, in the next Place, give you (out of *Sir W. Dugdale's Origines Juridicales*) some Account of the Judges Fees or stated Salaries, but it is very imperfect, and only better than none at all.

In 1226. The Fee of a Justice was, <i>per Ann.</i>	— — —	X Marks.
In 1239. A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	XX Lib.
In 1243. A Baron of the <i>Exchequer</i> , had	— — —	XL M.
And in the same Year, a Baron of the <i>Exchequer</i> , had but	— — —	XX M.
In 1259. A Justice of the <i>King's Bench</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
In 1260. A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	C M.
And in the same Year a Judge of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
In 1262. Chief Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	C L.
A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> ,	— — —	XL L.
In 1265. A Baron of the <i>Exchequer</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
In 1269. Chief Justice of the <i>King's-Bench</i> , had	— — —	C M.
In 1281. Chief Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	XL M.
In 1299. Chief Justice of the <i>King's-Bench</i> , had	— — —	L M.
Chief Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	C M.
Chief Baron of the <i>Exchequer</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
The Justices of Both Benches, and Barons of <i>Exchequer</i> had each	— — —	XX L.
In 1302. A Justice of the <i>King's-Bench</i> , had	— — —	LXXX M.
In 1364. Chief Baron, and the other Barons of the <i>Exchequer</i> had each	— — —	XL L.
In 1367. A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
Chief Justice of the <i>King's-Bench</i> , had	— — —	C M.
A Justice of the <i>King's-Bench</i> , had	— — —	XL L.
In 1382. A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	— — —	XL M.
In 1399. Chief Baron of the <i>Exchequer</i> , and other Barons had	— — —	XL M.

Chief



Chief Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	XL L.
A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	XL M.
In 1402. Chief Justice of the <i>King's-Bench</i> , had	XL L.
In 1408. A Justice of the <i>Common-Pleas</i> , had	LV M.

In 1440. Upon a general Complaint of all the *Benches*, and of the *Attorney General*, of the ill Payment of their *Fees*, there was an Inquiry made, what they had usually received for the last ten Years past, and what the Crown was indebted to them; by which, and by the Answer that was made to it, it appears, that the standing Fee of each *Chief Justice* was 40*l. per Ann.* but that by private Letters Patent, the *Chief Justice of the Common-Pleas* was allowed 180 Marks *per Ann.* And the *Chief Justice of the King's Bench* was allowed 140 Marks *per Ann.* besides their Fees. And for their *Winter Robes*, 5*l. 6s. 11d.  $\frac{1}{4}$ .* And for *Summer Robes*, 3*l. 6s. 6d.* The Fee of the *Justices* of both *Benches* was 40 Marks *per Ann.* their other Allowance was 110 Marks. The Fee of a Justice of *Affise* was 20*l.* the Fee of the *Attorney General* was 10*l. per Ann.* and what their other Allowance was, does not appear. The Allowance to the *King's Serjeants*, and the *Attorney*, for Robes was 1*l. 6s. 11d.*

In 1545. The *Chief Justice of the King's Bench* had an Addition of 30*l.* to his Fee: and each *Justice* of the same *Bench*, and of the *Common-Pleas* had an Addition of 20*l.* And indeed, at the very best, their Rewards seem to have been far from equal to the faithful Discharge of their most painful and most useful Office: and yet it hath so pleased God to bless their Labours, that I do not think I mis-reckon, when I say, That the *Law* hath laid the Foundation of *Two Thirds* of all the *Honours*, and great *Estates* in all *England*.

Let us now see a little to the Wages of *Workmen* and *Servants*, which has ever been accounted of such Importance, that the Parliaments themselves have thought fit to take cognizance of it, and to regulate it, according to the Rules following; though, I think, with no great success.

In 1351. Workmen were to take their Wages in *Wheat*, at the rate of 10*d.* the Bushel, which is 6*s. 8d.* the Quarter.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Sarclers (that is Weeders) and Hay-makers, by the Day,	00	00	01
Mowing Meadows, 5 <i>d.</i> the Acre, or by the Day,	00	00	05
Reapers of Corn, in the first Week of <i>August</i> , by the Day,	00	00	02
In the second Week, and third, and so on to the end of it,	00	00	03
Without Meat, Drink, or other Courtesy demanded.			
For threshing a Quarter of Wheat and Rye,	00	00	02 $\frac{1}{2}$
For threshing a Quarter of Barley, Beans, Pease, and Oats,	00	00	01 $\frac{1}{2}$
A Master-Carpenter, Mason, or Tyler, by the Day,	00	00	03
Other Carpenters, Masons, or Tylers,	00	00	02
Their Servants, or Boys,	00	00	01 $\frac{1}{2}$
Plasterers, Workers of Mud-walls and their Knaves, or Servants,			
at the same rate, without Meat, or Drink, demanded.			
In 1360. Master-Carpenters,	00	00	04
Others,	00	00	03
Their Servants,	00	00	02
In 1389. The Bailiff for Husbandries yearly Wages,	00	13	04
together with his Clothing, once by Year at most, and his Diet, which is supposed in the following Cases.			
The Master Hind, or Chief Husbandman labouring,	00	10	00
The Carter, and the Shepherd, each by the Year,	00	10	00
The Oxheard,	00	06	08

The



	l.	s.	d.
The Cowheard, _____	00	06	08
The Swineheard, _____	00	10	00
The Woman Labourer, _____	00	06	00
The Dayry-Woman, _____	00	06	00
The Plough-Driver, at most, _____	00	07	00
In 1446. The Wages of a Bailiff of Husbandry, _____	01	03	04
His Cloathing (Diet still supposed) _____	00	05	00
The chief Carter, and chief Shepheard, _____	01	00	00
Their Cloathing, each _____	00	04	00
A common Servant of Husbandry, _____	00	15	00
His Cloathing, _____	00	03	04
A Woman-Servant, _____	00	10	00
Cloathing, _____	00	04	00
An Infant ( <i>i. e.</i> one under fourteen Years of Age) _____	00	06	00
Cloathing (with Diet) _____	00	03	00
The Servants of Hostlers ( <i>i. e.</i> Innkeepers) Victuallers, and Artificers, at the same Rates.			
From <i>Easter</i> , till <i>Michaelmas</i> , _____			
A Free-Mason, or Master-Carpenter, with Diet, by the Day, _____	00	00	04
Without Diet, _____	00	00	05½
A Master-Tyler, Slater, Rough-Mason; a mean Carpenter, and other Artificers, building by the Day, with Diet, _____	00	00	03
Without Diet, _____	00	00	04½
Other Labourers, with Diet, 2 <i>d.</i> without Diet, _____	00	00	03½
From <i>Michaelmas</i> to <i>Easter</i> , they had a Penny by the Day less, the Days being then shorter.			
But in time of Harvest a Mower had, with Diet, _____	00	00	04
Without Diet, _____	00	00	06
A Reaper, and Carter, with Diet, 3 <i>d.</i> without Diet, _____	00	00	05
A Woman-Labourer, and other Labourers, with Diet, _____	00	00	02½
Without Diet, by the Day, _____	00	00	04½
In 1514. A Bailiff of Husbandries yearly Wages, _____	01	06	08
His Cloathing (Diet supposed) _____	00	05	00
Chief Hind, Carter, and Shepheard, each _____	01	00	00
Cloathing (with Diet) _____	00	05	00
Common Servants of Husbandry, _____	00	16	08
Cloathing, _____	00	04	00
Women Servants yearly Wages, _____	00	10	00
Cloathing, _____	00	04	00
A Child ( <i>i. e.</i> a Servant) within 14. _____	00	06	08
Cloathing, _____	00	04	00
From <i>Easter</i> to <i>Michaelmas</i> , the daily Wages of _____			
A Free Mason, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
A Master Carpenter, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
A Rough Mason, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
A Bricklayer, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
A Tyler, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
A Plummer, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
A Glasier, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was _____	00	00	06
			A Carver,



	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
A Carver, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was	—	—	—
A Joyner, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet was	—	—	—
From <i>Michaelmas</i> to <i>Easter</i> , with Diet, 3 <i>d.</i> without Diet,	—	—	—
A Shipwright's Wages, was from <i>Candlemas</i> to <i>Michaelmas</i> ,			
1. A Master Carpenter, with Diet, 5 <i>d.</i> without Diet.	—	—	—
2. A Hewer, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet,	—	—	—
3. An able Clincher, with Diet, 3 <i>d.</i> without Diet,	—	—	—
4. A Holder, with Diet, 2 <i>d.</i> without Diet,	—	—	—
5. A Master Calker, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without Diet,	—	—	—
6. A mean Calker, with Diet, 3 <i>d.</i> without Diet,	—	—	—
A Calker labouring by the Tide, with Diet,	—	—	—

From *Michaelmas* to *Candlemas*, their Wages were,

	With Diet,		Without Diet,
	<i>d.</i>		<i>d.</i>
1. —————	4	—————	6
2. —————	3	—————	5
3. —————	2½	—————	4½
4. —————	1½	—————	3
5. —————	3	—————	5
6. —————	2½	—————	4½

Other Labourers, from <i>Easter</i> to <i>Michaelmas</i> , except in Harveſt-time, had by the Day allowed, with Diet, 2 <i>d.</i> without it,	—	—	—
From <i>Michaelmas</i> to <i>Easter</i> , with Diet 1 <i>d.</i> ½. without it,	—	—	—
In Harveſt-time, a Mower, with Diet, 4 <i>d.</i> without it,	—	—	—
A Reaper, and a Carter, with Diet 3 <i>d.</i> without it,	—	—	—
A Woman-Labourer and other Labourers, with Diet, 2 <i>d.</i> ½. without it,	—	—	—

The Reader is not to think that theſe Rules were every where obſerved ; but no Body could demand, or ſue (I ſuppoſe) for greater Wages, than were here allowed : and yet the different Cheapneſs or Dearneſs of Proviſions in ſeveral Countries, muſt be allowed to make amends for different Wages ; and therefore theſe Rules could not be univerſally reaſonable.

C H A P. VI.

The CONCLUSION.

TO apply the Chapter of *Corn*, and make it uſeful to your preſent Purpoſe, you muſt, in the firſt Place, remember, that, during the whole Reign of *Henry VI.* excepting the firſt and laſt Years of it (which contains ſeventeen Years above the Time of your Enquiry, which is from 1440 to 1460,) there were 30*s.* in the Pound ; whereas there are now (and have been for above an hundred Years) 62*s.* The Ounce of Silver was then, at 2*s.* 6*d.* it is now at 5*s.* 2*d.* So that the 5*l.* (which is the Summ



you are concerned about) did *then* contain 40 Ounces; and 5*l. now*, does not contain above 19 Ounces  $\frac{1}{3}$ . From whence you may safely conclude, that 5*l.* in the Reign of *H. VI.* was of somewhat better value, than 10*l.* now-a-days is. In the next place, to know somewhat more distinctly whereabouts an Equivalent to your ancient 5*l.* will come, you are (as I before hinted) to observe how much Corn, Meat, Drink, or Cloth, might have been purchased two hundred and fifty Years ago, with 5*l.* and to see how much of the modern Money will be requisite to purchase the same quantity of Corn, Meat, Drink, or Cloth, now-a-days. To this End, you must neither take a very dear Year, to your Prejudice, nor a very cheap one, in your own Favour, nor indeed any single Year, to be your Rule; but you must take the Price of every particular Commodity, for as many Years as you can (twenty, if you have them) and put them all together; and then find out the common Price; and afterwards take the same Course with the Price of Things, for these last twenty Years; and see what Proportion they will bear to one another; for that Proportion is to be your Rule and Guide.

Thus, if for twenty Years together (from 1440, to 1460,) the common Price of *Wheat* were 6*s.* 8*d.* the Quarter; and if from 1686, to 1706, the common Price of *Wheat* were 40*s.* the Quarter; it is plain, that 5*l.* in *H. VI.* Time, would have purchased 15 Quarter of *Wheat*; for which you must have paid, for these last twenty Years, 30*l.* So that 30*l. now*, would be no more than equivalent to 5*l.* in the Reign of *H. VI.* Thus, if *Oats*, from 1440, to 1460, were generally at 2*s.* the Quarter, and from 1686, to 1706, were at 12*s.* the Quarter, it is manifest that 12*s. now*, would be no more than equivalent to 2*s. then*, which is but a sixth Part of it. Thus if *Beans* were *then* 5*s.* and *now* 30*s.* the Quarter, the same Proportion would be found betwixt 5*l.* and 30*l.* But you must not expect that every Thing will answer thus exactly. *Ale*, for Instance, was, during the Time of your Founder, at Three-half-pence the Gallon; but it has been, ever since you were born, at 8*d.* at the least: which is but 5 times more, and a little over. So that 5*l.* heretofore (betwixt 1440, and 1460,) would purchase no more *Ale*, than somewhat above 25*l.* would now. Again, Good *Cloth*, such as was to serve the best *Doctor* in your *University*, for his Gown, was (between 1440, and 1460,) at 3*s.* 7*d. ob.* the Yard; at which Rate 5*l.* would have purchased 27 Yards, or thereabouts. *Now*, you may purchase that quantity of fine Cloth, at somewhat less, I think, than 25*l.* So that 25*l. now*, would be an Equivalent to your 5*l. then*, two hundred and fifty Years since, if you pay about 18*s.* the Yard, for your Cloth. I think I have good Reason to believe, that Beef, Mutton, Bacon, and other common Provisions of Life, were six times as cheap in *H. VI.* Reign, as they have been, for these last twenty Years. And therefore I can see no Cause, why 28, or 30*l. per Ann.* should now be accounted a greater Estate, than 5*l.* was heretofore, betwixt 1440, and 1460.

Sir *H. Spelman* (a very competent Judge and Æstimator of these Matters) complains, That the Laws have not sufficient regard to the different Price of Things, when they condemn People to death, for stealing things to the value of *twelve Pence*; for though that is according to Law, yet that Law was made when *twelve Pence* would have purchased, as much as you must now-a-days give 20, 30, nay 40*s.* for. And he instances in a Quarter of *Wheat*, which in the *Affise of Bread*, 51 *H. III.* was rated at *twelve Pence*, but, in his Time, was often sold for 40*s.* and upwards. It is certain, the Laws do never condemn any One to death, for stealing to the value of *one*, *no*, nor *three* or *four Shillings*: but it is certain, that many die for stealing Things of less value than 20 *Shillings*. And therefore, I think, I have very sufficient Reason, (not to *determine*, but) to *conjecture*, that 5*l.* two hundred and sixty Years ago, was equivalent to 28, or 30*l. now*. And consequently, that he who has an *Estate of Inheritance*, or a *perpetual Pension*, of that value, now-a-days, may as honestly hold a *Fellowship* with it, as he who lived



two hundred and sixty Years ago, might have held it, with 99*s. per Ann.* Nor does my Kindness and Concern for you, bias my Judgment in this Affair; for I have thought the same Thing, long before your Question was put; and, indeed, ever since I could consider the difference of Times, and the different Prices of Corn and all other Commodities. And I had rather put your Conscience on this Bottom, whose Reason is clear, and founded upon Matter of Fact, and History not to be controlled; than upon the common Presumption, that your Founder did certainly intend, *his Scholars* should live like *other Scholars* of the University; and that the Way of living being now much changed (do not offer to say improved) from what it was so long ago, you must needs be at liberty to live in the same Manner; for I dare say, that neither your Founder, nor any other Founder, if he were now alive, would admit of many expensive Articles, which the corrupt Customs of the Times, and multitude of Examples, have made young People think necessary; and which, I am persuaded, must, some time or other be reformed, as Things neither useful nor creditable to the Life of a Student. But of this, you will think I have said at least enough.

The Application of the Chapter of *Stipends*, to your Purpose is this; That if, about your Founder's time, 7 or 8 Marks was judged a competent Provision for a single Clergyman, and 8 Marks do not much exceed 5*l.* then 5*l.* was a tolerable Maintenance for a single Student. And if so, then if 28, or 30*l.* be now-a-days, but a sufficient Maintenance for a single Student (sober and virtuous) it can be presumed to be no more now, than 7 or 8 Marks heretofore was, and therefore may be enjoyed with the same Innocence and Honesty, together with a *Fellowship*, according to the Founder's Will.

I have now discharged my Engagement, and given such Answer to your Question, as I think is reasonable, and Honest: and might here take my Leave of you, if I did not think it would be acceptable enough, both to you, and other Readers, to acquaint you, that since I was employed in writing an Answer to your Question, I had another put to me, concerning the *Oath* which the *Sheriff* of a County puts to such as are *Electors* of Parliament-Men, if he thinks fit; *viz.* Whether they have Lands or Tenements to the yearly value of 40*s. ultra Reprisas?* *i. e.* Whether they have 40*s. per Ann. clear*; All certain and necessary Charges being abated and deducted; for though a Man may receive 8*l.* a Year for his Estate, yet if his *Quit-Rent*, or any other certain Payment, be 13*s. 4d.* that Man has not an Estate of 8*l. ultra Reprisas*, because there is 13*s. 4d.* to be reprized, or *taken back again*, which is, I think, the meaning of the word. Now this Act of Parliament was made, 8 H. VI. when 40*s. per Ann.* clear of all Encumbrance, was at least equal to 8*l. per Ann.* now-a-days, (I put it so low, to avoid all cavil and dispute.) When a Freeholder therefore, does now take his Oath, that he has an Estate of 40*s. per Ann.* it is manifest he does not mean 40*s.* as it was valued when that Act of Parliament was made (1430) but as 40*s.* go now in 1706. Is it not therefore manifest that he does not swear to the Purpose and Intention of the Law-givers, and only swears true to the *Denomination* of 40*s. per Annum?* To this I answered, That doubtless, the Purpose and Intention of the Legislators, in 1430, was defeated by such an Oath, when he who swears has really but 40*s. per Ann.* as Money and Things go now. But yet that such an Oath was honestly taken, and without any perjurious Fraud, or Reservation, because taken according to the literal Sense of the Words of it, and because taken in the Sense of those who administer it, and (as is most reasonably presumed, though not declared) in the Sense of the Legislative Power, which accepts, and justifies such Proceedings, and which has equal Power and Authority, to put what signification it pleases on Words, with the Parliament that made that Act, in 1430. These Things, when put together, may look, at first sight, somewhat oddly; that *one* Man may swear he is not worth 5*l. per Ann.* according to the Statute that requires such Oath,



Oath, when he is really worth more than 10*l.* or 20*l.* *per Ann.* and another may swear he is worth 40*s.* *per Ann.* when he is really not worth 10*s.* *per Ann.* according to the Statute that first imposed that Oath. You see then how necessary it is to distinguish Times.

Whether the Legislative Power, in 1430, did well, and wisely, in reducing the Number of Electors to such as were worth 40*s.* *per Annum*, (which cut off many hundred thousand Voices, and consequently many occasions of Tumults and Disorders) is not to be doubted over-much; nor yet is to be over-confidently affirmed, because if it had been so wise and useful an Ordinance, it would have still been kept up, in its due Proportion, according to the difference of Times; although the Changes of such Moment are not to be frequently and lightly made. But in these Affairs, it is not fit for private People to meddle.

I have but one Thing more to offer to your Consideration, from the Accounts I have given of the different Price of Corn, and other Commodities, and then I will put an end to this long Letter: And that is, That if ever you design to take Orders, and obtain any *Rectory*, *Vicarage*, or higher *Dignity* in the Church, you be, above all Things, careful, how you make any Composition or Agreement, for any long Space of Years, to receive a certain Price of Money, for the Corn that is due to you, although for the present it may seem a tempting Bargain, and a profitable Exchange, and rid you of some Trouble. You know not what Time may bring forth, nor what great Alterations may happen, nor what great Mischiefs you, unwittingly, may do your Successors. But I cannot better represent my Meaning, nor shew you the ill Consequence of such Agreements, than in the Words of Dr. Kennet, in his *Parochial Antiquities*; out of which, I will, with his Leave, and for your Sake, and for the common Benefit, transcribe a Page or two, to our present Purpose, *p.* 604. “ For the Mischief of a dead  
“ and unimproved Allowance in Money, there is a good Instance cited in a Charter to  
“ the Church of *Peterborough* (See *Gunton's Hist.* put out with great Additions by  
“ Bishop *Patrick*) by *Walter de S. Edmundo*, about 1240, where the Abbot does  
“ grant, for God's Sake, and in respect to Peace, that instead of the Assize for Corn,  
“ which the *Cellerarius* paid him out of *Belassise*, he would hereafter accept of an  
“ Equivalent in Money, *viz.* for 28 Quarter and one Schepe (*i. e.* a Bushel) of Wheat,  
“ he should receive 4*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.* by which Computation each Quarter was then va-  
“ lued at 3*s.* 4*d.* Had the Abbey continued, what an unhappy Bargain had it proved  
“ by this Time, when the Rent must have kept standing at 4*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.* whereas  
“ the present value of the Corn, would have been seldom less than Fifty Pounds. Such  
“ like Prejudice was done to the Church of *Sulthorn* (now *Souldern*) *Com. Oxon.* the  
“ Rector whereof used to receive from the Abbot and Convent of *Oseney*, one Acre of  
“ Bread-Corn, growing on their Demesne of *Mixbury*, and four Pence from their De-  
“ mesne of *Fulewell*, till about the latter end of *Hen. III.* *Robert de Hay*, Rector of that  
“ Church, agreed to receive One hundred Shillings from the said Abbey, to purchase  
“ to himself and Successors, the Annual Rent of five Shillings, in full Compensation  
“ for the said Acre of Corn. So when *Maud de Chesney* had given to the Prior and  
“ Canons of *Burcester* 5 Quarters of Bread-Corn, out of her Mannor of *Heyford*; (now  
“ *Heyford Warine*) *Com. Oxon.* to be delivered yearly to them, on Condition they  
“ should find Hosts, or consecrated Bread at the said Church of *Heyford*; when this  
“ Mannor and Church were conveyed to *New College in Oxford*, *Tho. Banbury* Prior  
“ of *Burcester* and his Convent did, in 2 *H. VII. A.* 1486, release the said Rent-  
“ Charge of Corn, for the Consideration of six Shillings and eight Pence, yearly in Mo-  
“ ney; which, by this time, would have born no greater Proportion to that quantity of  
“ Wheat, than 1 does to 30. When Parish-Churches were first appropriated to Re-  
“ ligious Houses, they were supplied by Secular Priests, who were stipendiary Curates,  
“ with



“ with the Salary of 5, or at best, but 10 Marks ; and when by the Ordination of  
 “ Vicarages, this Stipend was exchanged into a standing Portion of Tithe and Glebe,  
 “ and Manse, such Endowment was generally proportioned to the Pecuniary Rate of 5  
 “ or 10 Marks, so that the Alteration at that time, was no Benefit to the Priest, only  
 “ as it bettered his Title, and made him a Perpetual Vicar, instead of an Arbitrary Cu-  
 “ rate. But consider, if the Portion of the Vicar had been allotted in such a certain  
 “ Summ of Money, what Mendicants must our Country-Vicars now have been !  
 “ Whereas the Assignation being made in improveable Land and Tithe, by this means  
 “ (the value of Money abating, and the rate of Land and Commodities advancing) some  
 “ Vicarages, which at the first Ordination, had no greater Endowment than what was  
 “ equivalent to 5 Marks, do now afford the Maintenance of 50*l. per Ann.* Hence the  
 “ Memory of Sir *Thomas Smith* is highly to be honoured, for promoting the Act in  
 “ 18 *Eliz.* whereby it was provided, that a third Part of the Rent upon Leases made  
 “ by Colleges, should be reserved in *Corn*, payable either in Kind or Money, after the  
 “ rate of the best Prices in *Oxford*, or *Cambridge* Markets, on the next Market-Day  
 “ before *Michaelmas* and *Lady-Day*. This worthy Knight is said to have been en-  
 “ gaged in this Service, by the Advice of Mr. *Henry Robinson*, soon after *Provost* of  
 “ *Queens College, Oxon.* and from that Station advanced to the See of *Carlisle*. And  
 “ Tradition goes, that this Bill passed the Houses, before they were sensible of the good  
 “ Consequences of it. We know, in the latter Times of our Confusion, a Project was  
 “ carried on, of destroying the ancient Right of Tithes, and converting that pious  
 “ Maintenance of the Clergy, into settled Portions of Money. How fatal this Innova-  
 “ tion would have been in time, is ingeniously urged by two ingenious and learned  
 “ Writers, (Mr. *Stephens* Preface to Sir *H. Spelman* of Tithes ; and Dr. *Comber*, *Histor.*  
 “ *Vindication of Tithes, P. II. C. X.*) We have had some Benefices in *England*, al-  
 “ tered by such Method, by Decrees in *Chancery*, with a certain Summ in Money,  
 “ allotted in Compensation of all Tithes : This may seem an Ease, and perhaps an Ad-  
 “ vantage, upon the first Establishment of it. But, unless the Incumbent be invested  
 “ with a Power of Revocation ; and as the Reason alters, can re-assume his Right of  
 “ Tithing, I am sure, in an Age or two, the Successors will suffer extreamly by such  
 “ a Bargain. For a Living now, of *One hundred Pounds per Ann.* in Composition-  
 “ Money, will, in a future Generation, by this stinted Revenue, not exceed another  
 “ Living, that is not, at present, of half the value, in Glebe and Tithe. And it will  
 “ then (too late) appear, that the Predecessor, who complied with such a Change,  
 “ did not consult the Interest of the Church ; and that such a Decree did not become  
 “ a *Court of Equity*. It is very obvious to consider, that nothing has been a more un-  
 “ just Diminution of small Tithes, than the Custom of a Rate *in Money*, instead of the  
 “ titheable Thing in kind ; though such Rate, no doubt, when first imposed was equi-  
 “ valent to the Things commuted for it, whereas they now bear but small, or no Pro-  
 “ portion to it. As, for Instance, in one of the old *Saxon* Laws (confirmed by  
 “ the *Conqueror*) it is provided, That if a Man have one or two *Colts*, he shall pay  
 “ for the fall of each, *one Penny*, and the like for *Calves* ; which was a just Proportion,  
 “ when the best Colt or Calf was not valued above 10*d.* But the Iniquity is, that this  
 “ Custom does *still* obtain in many Parishes ; and the like minute Consideration, for  
 “ *Wool* and *Lambs*, where, for Custom sake, the Trifle must be taken, without any  
 “ Allowance for the much advanced value of them : by which means, the *modus De-*  
 “ *cimandi* is a growing Injury, and calls for a Relief by Law, when it shall please the  
 “ Wisdom, and the Justice of our Governours. Those eight Men of Quality and  
 “ Learning, who were appointed at the beginning of the Reformation, to collect such  
 “ Ecclesiastical Canons, as ought to remain in force, did freely declare their Judgment,



"*That these Customs ought to be abrogated.* And the learned Dr. Cowell has professed the same Opinion, that it is reasonable to take away all such Customs, as do lessen the Tenth Part, due to the Church of God. (the *Interpreter* in the word *Tithe*.)" Thus far that learned and experienced Person, to whose Authority I can add nothing, since what he says is plain and reasonable, and confirmed by Matter of Fact. And I do heartily concur with him, in wishing the Gentlemen of the *Clergy* would seriously consider these Matters, wherever they have occasion. And thus, you see, that the Consideration of these small Matters, may be of Use, in Things of great importance. I have only to add, That I shall think my self well paid for my Pains, if I have given you the Satisfaction you desire, and any little Encouragement to look your self into the *Antiquities* of your Native Country, according to the very laudable Example of many excellent Persons of your *Famous University*.

**A THANKS-**



## A T H A N K S G I V I N G

## S E R M O N

Preached before the Q U E E N at  
St. Paul's, August 19. 1708.

EZEKIEL Chap. XXXVI. Ver. 32.

*Not for your sakes do I do this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you : Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O House of Israel.*

**T**H E Prophet is, in this Chapter, commanded by God to comfort the People and Land of *Israel* with the News of the Destruction of the Heathen, who spitefully used them, and insulted over them, in their Misfortunes; and with the Blessings of God, promised unto them: And to tell them, moreover, That as they had been rejected for their Sins, so they should be restored without their Deserts: And lastly, what Use they ought to make of these his Favours. *Thus saith the Lord God, Because the Enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient High Places are ours in Possession; therefore prophecy and say, Surely in the Fire of my Jealousy have I spoken against the Residue of the Heathen, which have appointed my Land unto their Possession, with the Joy of all their Heart, with despiteful Minds, to cast it out for a Prey. I have lifted up my Hand; surely the Heathen that are about you, they shall bear their Shame. But ye, O Mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your Branches, and yield the Fruit to my People of Israel, for they are at Hand to come; for behold I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and will multiply upon you Man and Beast; and they shall increase and bring forth Fruit, and I will settle you after your old Estate, and will do better with you than at your Beginnings, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.* But because Men are exceeding apt to over-value themselves; lest the Jews should vainly imagine that God removed these Evils from them, and promised them these Blessings for their own sakes, the Prophet is commanded farther to undeceive them, and tell them plainly, *ver. 17. That God punished them, and gave them up to their Enemies deservedly, and for their Sins, which they forsook not in their Sufferings, but profaned his Holy Name among the Heathen; and therefore could not in Reason think, that they deserved to be delivered by him. But, lest they should, he tells them, ver. 22. Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes; and then goes on to tell them what Blessings he will farther bestow upon them; and in ver. 31. tells them how they should improve these Favours. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your Iniquities, and for your Abominations.* And then follow the Words of the Text, which seem to comprize the whole Matter again: *Not for your sakes do I do this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you : Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O House of Israel.* Of which Words, the Uses we may make at this Time, are these. First, To consider, that though God never punishes a Nation, but when it deserves it at his Hands, yet he often blesses a Nation when it does not deserve it. *Be it known*



unto you, saith the Lord God, not for your sakes do I this, i. e. deliver you from Evils, and promise you Blessings. Secondly, That the Sense of these undeserved Favours should work upon Mens Hearts, and stir them up the rather to Repentance—*Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O House of Israel.*

I. That God does never punish or afflict a Nation, but it deserves it at his Hands, is agreed upon most universally; because no Body can conceive otherwise, without conceiving him unjust, which contradicts both the natural and revealed Notions we have of him, which set him forth as the most perfect, excellent, and useful Being; and therefore one that can have no Temptation to Injustice, much less can arbitrarily be unjust, or punish without Cause and Provocation; which would not only destroy the Nature of Justice, but even the End and Design of Punishment, which is not only to afflict Offenders, but to terrify and discourage People from offending. God's Punishments are always for a good End, for Illustration of his Power, to declare his Hatred of Sin, and to deter others from sinning. Now the Power of God is manifested in punishing; but to shew his Hatred of Sin withal, he must only shew his Power in punishing *Sinners*; and if the Exercise of this Power is to deter others from sinning, it can only do it by punishing *Sinners*. Every thing helps to shew, that a Nation or People is never punished by God, but it deserves it at his Hands; for God can do nothing unjust, nor punish undeservedly; nor have we any other way of judging of his Power, than by our natural Notions of his Justice and Goodness, with the concordant Declarations of his Will in Revelation.

But God does often bless a Nation and People, when they deserve it not; which is the other Part of the Proposition, and full as certain as the first. To this we can all of us bear full Testimony, and evidence its Truth, by the many and great Favours we continually receive at God's Hands, which we may well acknowledge *undeserved*, not out of our Humility and Modesty, but in great Truth and Justice; and unless it were so, there could be no room for Mercy and Favour. To deserve Evil, and receive Good, is as necessary to the Illustration of God's Mercy, as to deserve Evil, is to the Justification of his Righteousness when he punishes. A Man can no more be *pardoned*, than he can be *punished*, without Fault: And therefore, as our Offences vindicate God's Justice, so do they also illustrate his Mercy and Forgiveness. And though we must not therefore sin, *that Grace may abound*, yet without Sin, it is sure that Grace could not abound; for there would be no need of it, as it is taken for God's free Mercy and Forgiveness of our Sins, by the Blood of *Jesus Christ*.

And as it is, with regard to our Spiritual Concerns, to the Gifts and Graces of God, and the Forgiveness of our Sins; so is it also with respect to our Temporal ones, to the Blessings and Favours he bestows on Men in this Life; they are all of them undeserved; Marks of his Goodness, not the Rewards of any Merit on our part. *Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you.* And though there is no doubt but God hath secret Reasons, strong and good, for these Proceedings, yet need we not be solicitous of knowing what they are; for every one is satisfied, no one disputes or murmurs about Favours; both God and Man may shew Compassion without Restraint, and on what Terms they please; for no one is thereby injured; no one is free to do another the least Mischief, but all the Good he can, or will. Acts of *Justice* are always *necessary*, and therefore under Laws and Rules; and Men cannot shew as much or as little as they please, but as much as is reasonable and fit in the Cases before them; but Acts of *Favour* are always *voluntary*, and therefore left at large for Men to do them as they please, either more or less. And therefore, there is no Difficulty of understanding, and assenting to what God says to *Moses*, (as it is cited by *St. Paul*, Rom. ix. 15.) *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy, and I will have Compassion on whom I*

*will*



will have Compassion; for no Body is hurt by as much Mercy and Compassion as can be shewn: Here is no exercise of a Power that People tremble under, but of one that all Mankind rejoices in, and cares not how far it is extended.

We are all of us fit for undeserved Favours; and if God should deal with us according to our Righteousness and Innocence in his Eye-sight, though one Man would be happier than another, yet even the best would be but miserable.

But because the Text especially refers to Blessings National and Common, and we are met by publick Order, to commemorate with Thankfulness to God the *Blessings* that we have received, all other private Considerations must give way on this Occasion.

The Text would very well allow me to recount the many great Deliverances that God hath wrought for us, in the several Days of our Distress; and the many amazing Successes he hath blessed us with from time to time, for many Generations, as well against our Enemies abroad, as the Disturbers of our Peace at home.

The *Reformation* of Religion at the first, from so much Superstition and Corruption, as had over-spread its Face—The awakening of the Nation to the Light and Truth of *Christ's* Gospel, after so long and so profound a Sleep in Ignorance and Error—The *Restoration* of the Royal Family, and of the Government both in Church and State, after a long unnatural War, and the total Subversion of them both, and settling all Things on their old Foundations—The *Revolution*, that secured again our Church and State, when their Foundations were again shaken—These so great and universal Blessings, would not be here improperly insisted on, when we are counting up the Instances of God's Favour and Mercy to our Nation; and when we set our selves to consider, we never can forget them; nor remember them without great Gratitude and Praise. But these would call for much more Time and Patience than I can look for upon this Occasion; I know not if I should be now permitted to number up distinctly the Blessings of even so small a Part (I hope) of the *Present Reign*, as is already passed: They have been many in their Weight and Number, and have been each of them considered in their proper Season; and if the Mention of them now may but excite one short and transient Act of Praise and Thankfulness to God within your Minds, I shall not think I have neglected them.

Nor does the present Year want to recall the former ones, to furnish us with Matter for Thanksgiving both for *Deliverance*, and for *Victory*: Sufficient to it are the Blessings of it.

The insolent Attempt of *France* upon the Nation in the Spring, was so soon and easily defeated, that it hardly gave us time to apprehend any Danger from it: And even upon the soberest Recollection, if we might judge only by what appears, it seems to have deserved the general *Scorn* it was received withal. To see a Prince grown old in artful Wiles, and deep Contrivances, forming a Project of so vast Extent, and of the most momentous Consequence to all *Europe*,—and seconding it with Means so disproportioned, and ill fitted to their End—yet so assured of its Success,—is one of the most amazing Transactions of the Age we live in; which yet has been exceeding fruitful of Strange Things.

To think a Kingdom of so great a Compass, wealthy beyond all Imagination, flourishing in Trade, powerful in Fleets and Armies, most tender of its Liberties, tenacious of its Laws, and Customs, and Religion, and (for their sakes, as well as for her own) almost an Idolizer of its *Queen*—should tamely, on the sudden, surrender all these Blessings and Advantages in Exchange for a detested Superstition, Poverty, and Chains, under the Rule of One, whom they neither love, nor fear, nor know—and this to be effected by a Force which heretofore would scarcely have reduced an *English Nobleman*—may pass, upon the Reputation of the former Winter-Councils, and the usual Precaution of its great Contriver, for a *well-laid Design*: But sure, with Us, who know



our Selves, our Interests, and our Inclinations, and who have seen the Issue, it must for ever pass for a *most vain, ill-grounded Undertaking*.

See if I must not treat it in this manner, or be obliged to lay an unsupportable and everlasting Weight of guilt and infamy on some of our Fellow-Subjects, who must encourage, and invite, and promise to assist this strange Attempt.

And may it not as soon be believed, that a Prince, declining fast in Years; wasted, perhaps, a little in Understanding, by a long, close, and fixed Attention to Affairs of great Importance and Variety, and by most constant Labours of the Mind, as well as by a long luxurious Course of Living—vain and ambitious beyond all Example—pleased to hear, and capable of believing the grossest Flatteries—is it not full as easy to imagine, that such a Prince might be, for once, infatuated, and form most wild Designs—as that a Multitude of Men, (for without Multitude the Attempt would be but Madness) born in a Country of Great *Liberty*, professing the *Reformed Religion*, and bound to their Sovereign by many sacred and tremendous *Oaths*, should now, against Humanity and Honour, against all Sense of Conscience, Duty, and Religion, join with our implacable and most inveterate Enemy, to bring them all to Desolation and Destruction, and fill the Land with Misery and Blood?

It would be Matter of *Thanksgiving*, to have been delivered from so much Mischief, as even so small an Army might have done amongst a People so defenceless, and so ill-provided to withstand them; and to have disappointed an Attempt, that must have taken up Time, and Men, who would have been employed much better in another Place; and which might possibly have interrupted the Publick Operations for a Season, and consequently have prevented even the Occasion of assembling here this Day. But to give Thanks for a Deliverance from within our selves, from Men of such unnatural Wickedness, and Malice very near infernal, as those must needs have been, who called for and encouraged this Attempt, is a thing that would have entered last into one's Thoughts, and it may be, not at all, had we not been authentically taught to think so.

We have indeed a Party of *good Catholics* within us, from whom we neither do, nor ought to expect less than a secret Inclination to our Enemies at all times; nor less than open Combination with them, when it is seasonable and safe. But these profess their Enmity, and We, in our abundant Lenity, forgive and suffer them; because they hate us upon Principles, and must destroy us when they can; and we are well aware of it: But that our Liberties, Estates, Religion, and our Lives, should be offered up by such as profess themselves *Reformed*, and live among us as our *Friends*, is a Thing that is, in Theory, almost incredible.

One would, in truth, be somewhat slower to believe such villanous Designs could enter into Peoples Hearts, that this Attempt might not take Effect in any Branch of it; one of which was, doubtless, to create as many Fears, and Jealousies, and mutual Distrusts betwixt us, as could be towards one another; that we might not know who were our Friends, whom to converse withal, nor where to place any Trust or Confidence.

But we must blot out all our charitable Schemes, when once we are assured in Fact, that there were many from within, that must invite, encourage, and abet these Enemies of God, our Queen, and Government, our Laws and our Religion: Upon this Score, the Blessing of God upon our Publick Councils, in disappointing this *Invasion*, is made deservedly a Matter of *Thanksgiving*.

Our Enemies were, surely, in good earnest, when they ordered Publick Prayers, and exposed their Holy Sacrament in all their Churches, to implore a Blessing on this Undertaking; and their *Higb-Priest* himself thought fit to offer up his Intercessions with Solemnity, to interest all the Saints and Angels in the Enlargement of his Empire, and returning us again to Spiritual Bondage, by virtue of a Temporal Conquest; of which, it seems, they doubted but a little. Want of Success is never singly to determine



termine of the Virtue of Men's Prayers; let God alone (as He alone is worthy) be the *Object*, and let the *Matter* of them be but fit and lawful, and the good *Mind* intense and fervent in delivering them; the Prayers will then be good, whatever be the Issue. But every thing convinces us, these Prayers have not ascended up to God with Favour and Acceptance; however, I could wish, that we would learn from them, to be as zealous in a better Cause; and be as hearty in our Thanks for our Deliverances, as They were in earnest in their Prayers for our Destruction. *Let them give Thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered from the Hand of the Enemy.*

Let us now turn a little to the other Reason of Thanksgiving, for which we are assembled here this Day.

We had, indeed, formed (at our Ease) so many fine Schemes, and drawn so many gay Conclusions from the Success that had so often attended our victorious Arms, that finding them slip away (as it were) from between our Hands, without their imaginary Fruits, we began to sink into I know not what Spirit of Despondency; and grew *uneasy*, if not *fearful*. It is a great Misfortune to a People, this, that they cannot only not withdraw their Eyes from one unhappy Day, in so many happy Years; but cannot be content with *doing nothing*, (as they wrongly call it) although they in the mean time *suffer nothing*. This Temper may, some time or other, cost them dear, by forcing wise and brave Men to precipitate Affairs, against their Judgment, and the Reason of Things, whatever the Issue is like to be.

The Year, the People think, is quite lost, that does not bring the *Queen* to this good Place, to render up her Thanks to God for some great *Victory*. That, to be sure, is the Desire of Her's, and all our Hearts; but wise Men mingle with their Zeal and Prayers, the Consideration of the Uncertainties of War; the strange and unexpected Turns that now and then Affairs take; the many Accidents (and sometimes very small and inconsiderable ones) that overthrow Designs laid with the greatest Prudence, Secrecy, and Caution; and break the best-concerted Measures in the World; and thank God heartily for what Success he gives, but are not over-much surprized, nor grow impatient at their Disappointments. All that the wisest of the Sons of Men can do, is, to *design* with Reason and Probability; and pitch on *Means* most suitable, and likely to attain their End; but for the *Event*, that is not in their Hands, nor are they answerable for it.

The Posture of our Affairs at present, God be praised, wants not this, nor any such Apology; the Event has answered fully to the End and Means proposed and used: But had it not, the Overflowings of this froward Humour had not, I doubt, been stopped by these Excuses; which yet, are such as Reason, Experience, and most constant Observation, furnish all Men with, that give themselves leave to consider.

These Murmurs will be now, it is likely, drowned in the triumphant Noise and Joy of *Victory*; and many Discontents, and ill Affections, quieted by our Success. But they who love their Country, would be better pleased to see Men act upon more reasonable and noble Principles; that the Ease of Governours, and Peace of Governments, might not depend on any such Uncertainties; nor They who with incessant Labours, watch for our Security at home; nor They who with the greatest Toils, and utmost Hazard, fight for us abroad, owe all their Praise, their Honour, and Reward, if not their Safety, to such doubtful Issues as the Defeat of Armies, and the taking strong Towns, needs must be. In a word, they are unhappy Ministers of Peace and War, who please not by their Prudence, Vigilance, and admirable Management; by their Activity, their Courage, Conduct, and all other proper Qualities, without *Events astonishingly happy*. Let us send home these barbarous Maxims to the *East*, from whence, in an evil Hour, we fetched them.

Not



Not to satisfy our Impatience, or any loose, ill-grounded Expectations, but to fulfil some great good Purpose of his own, it hath pleased God, this Summer, to crown *Her Majesty's* Arms, and those of Her *Allies*, with great Success, against an Army, strong and numerous, and made up of the Flower of Armies, with all the Advantages of Ground and Situation, under a *General* of great Fame and Honour, excited to make good the mighty Hopes conceived of him, by the Presence of the most illustrious *Sons of France*, who were to owe their future Glories to his wise Lessons, and his brave Example; no small Encouragement to great and noble Undertakings.

To meet these Difficulties, nothing under God, but *British Forces*, were believed sufficient. And what will not they perform, inspired with a *good Cause*, and with the Love and Honour of their *Queen* and *Country*, and led by a *Commander* whom they love to follow, still to rescue from the extremest Hazards? And gladly they will hazard every thing, to preserve a Life with which each Soldier of the Army thinks his own is fast bound.

By lucky Accident, they were at this time more in heart than usually in other Battles, by having at their Head a *Princely Captain*, whom both in giving Orders, and in Heat of Fight, they might, not unhappily, mistake for *their own*; so that they seemed to have their *General* always in their Sight, when yet that *General* was, as usually, in every Place of Danger.

It is no great Wonder, when we hear such Forces, so Commanded, under such Excitements, should march to meet their Enemies with as much Speed as others fly from them; and when they had overtaken them, should quite forget their painful Day, and fight as if they had risen from Sleep, and all Refreshment. Had not the Sun gone down, Excess of Courage had destroyed them like an Enemy; no Human Strength could have sustained such Toil much longer; too many of them must have sunk under the Labours of Pursuit and Slaughter: The Darkness was as needful to those brave Men, as to the Fugitives before them.

Let the Vain-glorious Enemy now dispute the Victory: The *Princes*, and the *General*, and the *Army* fled, except a few that stood, to make the others Flight securer. Those Princes would not have begun their *Race of Honour* with mistaking of the Goal, and running backwards, had *Victory* been with them; nor would the *General's* Orders have been dated from a Place, where neither Friends nor Enemies expected him; but by Necessity; nor will the wisest After-game convince us, that his Flight was not precipitate and forced; nor will the *Army* be diminished less than many Thousands of their Morning-Number; nor shew any other Spoils and Ensigns of a *Victory*, than what will rather look like bought or stoln, than won in Field of Battle.

*May all your Enemies, GREAT QUEEN, for ever be Victorious, in this manner.*

The Place I stand in, forbids me all Approaches even to suspicious Praise, much more to any thing beyond: nor am I under any manner of Temptation to supply, with want of Truth, what should be fitly said on this Occasion. I shall be greatly wanting to my Subject; but that, at this Time, is more like to oppress than fail me: But, happily for me, the Nation has prevented me; I cannot say a Word upon this great Occasion, but I must borrow it from some of our most zealous, faithful Fellow-Subjects. Whether it were to felicitate her Majesty, upon the Unanimity of her *Army*; which, though made up of many Nations, did yet, with an ambitious Emulation, all conspire in trying who should do their Duty best, and merit most her Favour: Or whether, in particular, to give due Honour to that High-born *Prince*, who, by his noble Ardour, and adventurous Courage, hath convinced them, He deserves to be *the Hope* (but distant Hope) of Great Britain;



*Britain*; and who (they promise to themselves) shall Forty, Fifty Summers hence, lead forth their Armies, if this Triumphant Reign shall leave their Children any Enemies : Or whether it were to repeat the important Labours of Her most valiant, wife, and fortunate *Commander*, crowned with fresh Laurels every other Year ; because, it seems, they wither faster in our unkindly Climate, than elsewhere : Or, the incredible Alacrity with which the *Officers and Troops* advanced to fight the Enemy ; the Strength and Fury with which they fought ; and their Humanity, in sparing those that could be spared. How, in a word, Her *High Allies*, as well as Her brave Subjects, have behaved themselves, just as they would have done, could but *Her Majesty* (encompassed with good Angels) have been by, to look upon, to animate, to praise them, and reward them.

I should but very faintly reiterate what the Publick Voice hath said already on this glorious Action ; but it becomes me just to mention these Particulars, because they were the happy Instruments it pleased God to use, in giving that *Success*, which brings us to His Temple at this Time, to render him our hearty Praises for it.

Happy for us, in the next Place, if we could as clearly discern, that we had put our selves into the Way of deserving these great Favours, as that we wanted them, and have received them ! But there the Text will still be true, and truly applicable, as in its first Instance—*Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you.* We may, perhaps, imagine, that these Blessings are the Rewards of our Deserts ; when we forget our selves, we may imagine so ; but when we look about, to see where these deserving People live, whether in *Court*, or *Camp*, in *City*, or in *Country*, we shall change our Minds, and find we are preserved, as *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* might have been, by some few righteous Ones among us ; or blessed, when we are blessed, not to *Reward*, but to *Encourage* us to do our Duty.

Did ever Fair Example shine at *Court* with so small Influence ! where every body praises what they will not imitate ; as if they were so dazzled with its Lustre, that they rather lost their Way, than were directed by it ; so that it serves only for greater Condemnation. Was ever less Devotion in Peoples Hearts, if we may judge by its Appearance in their outward Gestures in the House of God, where even good Breeding will not now secure that good Behaviour, Silence and Attention, which Conscience of the Heavenly Presence, Reverence of the Place, and Company, and Hope of Benefit, did heretofore secure ? I stand not on *Externals*, though I know *Externals* must preserve the Substance of *Religion* ; Religion is itself much out of Countenance, and loses Ground continually : Mens Practices, though very naught, do hardly now belye their Principles, their Principles are so corrupted. The most important Truths of Christianity, are attacked with Insolence and great Rudeness by every petulant and idle Writer ; its Ordinances all decryed, and huge Contempt poured daily on its Ministers. This impious Licence may, for the present, please a sceptical and loose Generation ; but it can never long go well with such a People. Was ever Infidelity and Breach of *Matrimonial Contract* more avowed, and less regarded ? These perjured People are not now at the Trouble of concealing their Falshood from their injured Partners ; it seems to make part of their Pleasure and their Greatness, to wrong them openly, in Defiance both of God and Man : It is Modesty, and almost Virtue in this Age, to be a little secret in these bad Affairs.

It may be, it is not thought a *Fault* with some, to pass away the whole Life, as it were, in one continued *Revel* ; nor that *Excess* is any thing, because it is the Work of every Day ; nor that *intemperate Gaming* will be reckoned for, though it consume more Time than all the Business of their Life besides takes up ; and more Money than ever was expended by them on good Uses ; nay, though it hinder them from giving up those Hours they owe to God, and serious Recollection, and doing those good Deeds,



which they would otherwise incline to do, and which their Abilities and Condition would require of them. This is a growing Mischief with us, and daily wastes up many noble Patrimonies, defrauds the Servant of his Wages, and the Labourer of his Hire, *i. e.* occasions much Injustice, by disabling Men from paying their just Debts, and doing what becomes them, even to Wives and Children, and Relations, and Dependants. The great Oppression and Corruption of Offices and Officers, will be a less disputed Matter of Complaint, for the Cry thereof is great and general; nor does it much avail us, that the *Masters* are as honourable and virtuous as *Elisba*, if their *Retainers* are as greedy and corrupt as *Gebazi* was.

The Time would fail me to speak to these, and many more Abominations, that almost over-run the Kingdom: But I may not make it a Day of Reproach and Shame, which is a Day of Gladness and Thanksgiving. Only behold the Disposition we are in to receive these mighty Favours at God's Hands! And think how truly it is said, *Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you.*

But what we thus deny to our unworthy selves, we may, I hope, in part, attribute to the *Cause* that we defend. We cannot be too little assured of our own Deserts, nor yet too much, that we have Justice on our Side; for without this, we could not seek the Blessing of God, nor hardly thank him for Success. But if a Cause can be just, without any Scruple or Exception, sure, it must be the Maintenance of the *Common Liberty*; and an Attempt to hinder haughty and ambitious Spirits from being in a Condition to oppress the World about them, and enslave them at their Pleasure: And all the World has Reason to be concerned for a Cause that pleads its Liberty, and to rejoice in the Success that lays Impediments in the Ways of such destructive and unjust Designs. And I do not know that God can be invoked to assist an Enterprize more pleasing in his Sight, than the rescuing People from this dreadful Yoke, or the preventing them from coming under it. If any one thing be more his Hatred and Aversion than another, it must needs be the Author of unjust destroying War, that disturbs the Peace of Mankind, and brings such Desolation on the Earth, and such an endless Train of all sorts of Evils with it. Success against such Undertakings, is what we may most reasonably ask at God's Hands; as reasonably expect, but yet not claim as due by Promise, or in Justice; and when it follows, may as reasonably presume it comes from God, as any thing besides; and consequently may with all Sincerity return Him Thanks for it: And could our Gratitude but equal the Favours we have indeed received at God's Hands, we should, in this Point, be a very happy People.

But all that we can do, with respect to what is past, or to prepare our selves for what we farther want, and pray for——will be, to attend to what the Prophet says in the following Words, *Be ashamed and confounded for your own Ways, O House of Israel*, and let the Sense of all these undeserved Favours, lead us to Consideration, and Repentance, and Amendment.

II. We should, if we consider Matters rightly, be content rather to be reclaimed from Sin, and delivered from its Punishment by rigorous and severe Inflictions, and the heaviest Judgments, than not at all. But we shall be without Excuse, if we neglect to use his Mercies to this End and Purpose; and take Occasion from them to resolve to qualify and fit our selves a great deal better for them, than we heretofore have done. This is so plain and fitting for us to do, that I will trust it to the Reason of every one who hears me, without any farther Exhortation; and conclude, as I believe you will be all well pleased to do with me, with offering up most earnest Prayers to God, That He would bless the *QUEEN*, and *Us*, with a long and prosperous Reign over *Us*; Crown her with his Goodness; mark out her many Years with Triumphs and Successes,  
like



like to this, as long as War shall be found necessary; and with all the sweet Felicities of Peace, when Peace shall be our Blessing: That He would favour all the good Designs She has to make us happy, in Love and Unity with one another, in promoting Piety and Virtue, discouraging Profaneness, Immorality, and all ungodly License; in the Distribution of equal and impartial Justice, the Exercise of Clemency and Mercy in their proper Seasons; in securing our Trade Abroad, and encouraging it at Home. And that all Her Subjects Care may be, to second these so good Designs, by doing each their Duty in their several Stations, by laying aside all Enmities and Differences with one another, renouncing to all Parties, and uniting to promote the Publick Welfare, in which all private People will be sure to find their Account at last. And all this for the sake of our adorable Redeemer: To whom, with the Father, and the Blessed Spirit, be all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

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A SERMON



## S E R M O N

Preached before the Q U E E N, at  
St. James's, on SUNDAY, April 17. 1709.

St. MATTH. Chap. XXVII. Ver. 24, 25.

*When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a Tumult was made, he took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, saying, I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person; see ye to it. Then answered all the People, and said, His Blood be on us, and on our Children.*

**I**T appears from these Words, and from the other Evangelists, that *Pilate* had really taken some Pains, and used some Art, to deliver *Jesus* from the Persecution of the Priests, and the Rage of the People, who sought, he knew not why, his Death; or at least, to acquit his Hands of him. He heard his Accusation, and found it frivolous, and therefore bad them—*take him, and judge him according to their own Law*, John xviii. 31. He examined himself this dangerous Criminal, and yet declared—*he found no Fault in him*, even after he had owned he was a King, Luke xxiii. 4. He put them in Mind himself of the Custom they had, to have a Prisoner, whomsoever they desired, delivered to them at the Feast of the *Passover*; and would have had them chosen this *Jesus*, King of the *Jews*, to be the Man, John xviii. 39. He puts *Barabbas* in Nomination with him, one that was a Murderer and a Robber, in hopes (it is likely) to determine them, by such an odious and abhorred Comparison, to pitch on *Jesus*. There were, no question, many Malefactors in their Prisons; *Barabbas* had many Accomplices that lay bound with him (*Mark* xv. 7.) for Infurrection; but he alone had committed Murder in that Infurrection: This Villain, above all, he fixes on, to see if that could move them to prefer *Jesus* of *Nazareth* to him, for the Prisoner that he must deliver. He took occasion of sending him to *Herod*, from hearing he was a *Galilean*, to rid his Hands of him; and when that would not do, he again bespeaks the Rulers and the People, Luke xxiii. 14. *You have brought this Man unto me as one that perverteth the People, and behold, I having examined him before you, have found no fault in him, touching those things whereof you accuse him; no, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him, and lo nothing worthy of Death is done unto him; I will therefore chastise him, and release him.* No Judge could shew more Marks of a Disposition to acquit a Prisoner, than *Pilate* here shewed: One may see him almost partial in the Matter, not against Justice, (for he knew *there was no Cause of Death found in him, and knew besides they had delivered him for Envy*) but against the outrageous Clamours of the Priests and Multitude. It is not unlikely, that his very scourging him was with a merciful Intention of sparing his Life: He would proceed to such a Punishment, to countenance their Accusation, or to appease their present Rage; thinking, it may be, they would now be satisfied, and in some little Space of Time re-

lent,



lent, and fall from their violent Resolution of having him crucified. He suffered him to be crowned with Thorns, and exposed in a Purple Robe, and with a Reed for a Sceptre; and to be treated with all the Scorn and Insolence, and cruel Contempt, that a Pretender to those Honours might expect from a mad Multitude and common Soldiers, encouraged to it by their Governors and Leaders. This Usage, and this Sight, he thought might satiate their Ill-nature, and move some Pity in them; and when he found it would not operate that way, but that they cried out *Crucify* the louder, he said (what he should have remembred) *Take ye him, and crucify him, for I find no fault in him*: but then they were more instant than before, and cried out—*Let him be Crucified*.

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a Tumult was made—; when he saw that all the artful Pains which he had taken, all the Excuses he had made, the Arguments he had used, the Diversions and Delays he had sought out, and the downright Denials he had given them—; when he saw that nothing of all this would do, but that the Multitude was more incensed, and that instead of hearkning to him, and remitting somewhat of their Claim, they were rather like to force him from his Hands, and fall into Sedition, and set the City in an Uproar—, he submitted to those Fears that sometimes fall, in some degree, upon a brave and constant Man, that has to deal with Multitudes—; he yielded to the sad Necessity of giving up the Life of a private Person to the Tranquillity and Safety (as he imagined) of the Publick. But that he might do it with the better Grace—, He took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, saying, *I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person; see ye to it*. He would intimate hereby, that as that Water cleansed his Hands from any Foulness they might have contracted, so should the Protestation of the Force and Fear he was under, declare him innocent, and acquit his Conscience of whatever Guilt might be contracted by the Death of that just Man, who stood before him, and whose Blood they resolved to have. He, for his part, declared him *Innocent*, and was willing to let him go; they, by their Clamours, dreadful and importunate, and threatening Tumult and Confusion, would not let him act as Reason and Justice bid he should; let it therefore lie on them; let them, who by their mutinous Rage, obstructed Justice, answer for it—*See ye to it*. There is therefore in these Words, *First*, A Declaration of Christ's Innocence, and of his own; and a throwing the Guilt of his Condemnation on the Priests and People—I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person; see ye to it. *Secondly*, The Priests and People take this Guilt upon themselves—, *His Blood be on us, and on our Children*.

*First*, Pilate here acknowledges Christ's Innocence, in calling him a *just Person*. Judas, who had attended on him during his publick Ministry, came and acknowledged he had sinned, in betraying the innocent Blood. Pilate's Wife had sent to him, when sitting in Judgment, to warn him of having any hand in punishing that just Man, and now himself declares he was a *just Person*. Thus St. Peter reminds the Jews, That they denied the Holy One, and the Just, and desired a Murtherer to be granted to them, Acts iii. 14. Thus St. Stephen tells them—they had slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom they had been the Betrayers and Murtherers, Acts vii. 52. And thus saith Ananias to Saul—The God of our Fathers hath chosen Thee, that thou shouldst know his Will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the Voice of his Mouth, xxii. 14. Pilate, it is likely, by *just Person*, understood no more than a Man that was innocent of the Crimes of which he was accused; but his Wife must use that Word providentially; and surely by divine Appointment, since you see the Scripture-writers use it so remarkably, and with particular Distinction, as including the whole Character of Christ: And thus St. Peter, Christ hath once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God. Nor did the Malefactor know how



great a Truth he spoke, when he said of Christ, then dying by his Side—*This Man hath done nothing amiss*—nor did he understand how necessary it was, that what he said should be exactly true. He did not know his Neighbour-Cross was then the Altar, on which the Priest was offering up himself a Sacrifice to God for the Sins of all Mankind; that this his Fellow-sufferer was *the Lamb of God* (spotless and innocent) *that taketh away the Sins of the World*: And that *such an High Priest became us*, was indeed not only *fit*, but absolutely *necessary* for us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from Sinners*—not separate from them in his Life; for he conversed most freely with them, and came to call them to Repentance; nor separate from them in his Death, for *he was numbred with them*; but separated so, as never to be tainted or defiled with Sin. Such an High Priest befitted our Condition; we stood in need of such an Holy One, to offer up such a spotless Sacrifice, not for his own, but for our Sins, to propitiate God, procure our Pardon, to enter into Heaven, and there to make continual Intercession for us; which he could not have done, had he at any time *done any thing amiss*; had he not been in *all* Respects, what *Pilate* could but mean in *some*—*a just Person*.

But if he were thus *just*, why will this Governor condemn him? How can he join these two Things, *I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person*, when he is going to doom to Crucifixion that just Person? If he be *just*, why must he die? If he must die, though *just*, how should the Man be *innocent* who condemns him to Death? He *was* not innocent, his Declaration only shewed he *would* be innocent if he could: A little would serve to wash his *Hands*, but all the Waters in the World could not clear his *Conscience* of all Guilt, who being a Judge, would yield to the Clamours of an incensed Multitude, and condemn a Man he thought was innocent, and could not forbear declaring so with all Solemnity. A Magistrate is certainly obliged, though under never so great Constraint and Fears, to do what he should do were he at perfect Liberty. This appears from hence, that a Man's Heart reproaches him with having preferred his own Security, against Justice, to that of an innocent Person. He has saved himself, but he has lost another, whom he was certainly obliged to save: He has bought his own Security, at the Expence of another's Ruin; this he likes not, this he wishes had not passed. This is a hard Lesson to learn, to prefer another's Safety before our own; but they who undertake great Offices, and to do publick Justice, to right the Wronged, and to help the Oppressed, must undertake them on these Hazards: They are not express Conditions, but still implied, because the End of their Institution could not constantly be answered without such Venture. But what must *Pilate* do in such Distress? Must he hazard, for the sake of a poor despised Stranger, the Peace and Quiet of his People, the Confusion of his Government, it may be Loss of it, and *Cæsar's* Favour, rather than yield to the united Desires of the Rulers and the People to give that Stranger up? It is easy for People that are at Liberty, and unconcerned, to sit at home and determine what is just and right, and fit to be done, and to pronounce decisively upon the Matter. But it is another thing to find one's self under Fears and great Constraint, encircled with Crowds of a mad, enraged People, excited to Clamour and Importunity by their leading Masters and Rulers, both Secular and Spiritual, whose Skill and Judgment they depend upon, and whose Authority is sacred with them. A firmer Man than *Pontius Pilate* might in such Circumstances go aside out of the way of strict Justice, and be patient of submitting to what his Conscience could not chuse or like, were he at Liberty: His Case will therefore always meet with Pity, though with Blame also. The *Jews*, he had tried upon more Occasions than one, were the most furious, obstinate, and mad Multitude he had ever seen; quickly provoked, disposed to Mutiny, and ready to take Arms, and hard to be appeased and quelled when up: And he now saw them in a Disposition to tumult; the most forward, kindled into a strange  
Rage,



Rage, and ready for Revolt upon their Leaders Call, which a little farther Provocation might endanger. And how would he answer that to *Cæsar*, to endanger the setting on Fire a whole Province, for the sake of a little Injustice, or keeping his Conscience quiet? Would those Excuses do at *Rome*? Would they not bid him learn of *Caia-phas*—*That it was expedient that one Man should die, rather than the whole Nation be endangered*? I do not mean by this, to excuse this Man for complying with the unreasonable and wicked Importunities used with him, to condemn a Person whom he declared just and innocent; for he should have ventured himself in such a Case. And if Governors and Magistrates should be intimidated by Threats and Clamours, or great Hazards, to do what a Crowd of People should demand of them, without Regard to the Rules of Right and Just; if they should not be obliged to undergo all Hardships in executing their Offices, every body sees there would be an end of Order, Peace, and Government, and all Justice. If once the Multitude could find their Decrees submitted to, either to the sparing, or taking away the Lives of Men, they would never want Occasions of assembling; there would never be wanting wicked and designing People to stir them underhand to make their Claims, according as they found it to their Purpose. The greatest Criminals might go unpunished, and the greatest Innocence might not be safe. *Barabbas* here was to be pardoned, and *Christ* must be condemned, only because the Multitude will have it so. These are the unavoidable Consequences of a Magistrate's yielding to the Clamours of a Rout, against his Rule, and against his Conscience; and if they have not oft appeared, it is because the Magistrates have not often yielded: Whenever they do, it will be so; and there can be no greater Demonstration of their Obligation to venture all Extremities, rather than condemn the Innocent, or acquit the Guilty, than the Certainty of this Consequence, That without such Venture, the Multitude will always govern, and no Man could, though never so innocent and deserving, call his Estate, or Liberty, or Life his own. But this is also an equal Demonstration of the Excellence and Usefulness of Government, and that just and steady Magistrates do very well deserve the Honours and the Recompences that are bestowed upon them.

Nothing can be of worse Consequence either to Governors or private People, than that the Assemblings of the Multitude for any publick Purposes should be encouraged. The Noise of the Waves, and the Madness of the People, are alike dreadful, and alike dangerous, where they are let in; and deaf alike to all that you can offer—I find no fault in this Man—. No matter what you find, let him be Crucified. *Why, what Evil hath he done?* Then they redouble but their Cry,—*Crucify him, Crucify him.* Some cunning People have sometimes served a present Turn by these Assemblies, and done no great Mischief; and when they are (as we call it) on our Side, we apprehend no Danger: But all the Odds in the World are on the other Side; nor can the wisest, the most artful, powerful, and most popular Managers, warrant Security and Quiet for an Hour, their Heads are so quickly turned, and their Passions raised so easily. They are therefore to be repressed by all the Means imaginable, and the Men that practice on them, to be held in the greatest Suspicion; they should be treated like those who break up Damms, let in the Seas, and drown a Country.

The Rulers and the Priests who stirred up the People to ask *Barabbas*, and destroy *Jesus*, were certainly much more to blame than the People themselves, who made themselves their wicked Instruments. But the People were not without Fault, to be so stirred up; they have Reason and common Sense, as well as their Betters; and therefore shall answer to God for the Neglect or Abuse of it; they know they have nothing to do with publick Matters; they know they may not lie, nor accuse wrongfully, nor bear false Witness against their Neighbour; and yet they put themselves in the way of doing all these Things, when they suffer themselves to be excited by crafty and designing



signing Men, to appear in Crowds, and publickly accuse, defame, and call for Justice against Persons that may, for ought they know, be innocent and blameless, and only traduced by common Fame and uncertain Rumours. What did these People know of *Christ* our Lord, but what was worthy of their Love, Esteem, and Admiration? That he taught Men to serve God, and love one another; that he cured Diseases, healed Sickneses, cast out Devils, and spent his publick Life *in going about and doing good*. But because the Priests and Rulers were against him, persecuted him, and sought his Life; and told them I know not how many frightful Stories of the hazardous Condition their Church and State was in, and what a dangerous Man this *Jesus of Nazareth* was, and that Things could never possibly go well whilst he was suffered to preach and live—they swallow all, and join their Voices with their Leaders, and desire his Crucifixion; although they knew themselves no Harm of him, and heard the *Roman* Governor (who had no Interest in his Life or Safety) tell them again and again—*he found no fault in him*.

The Accusations of the Priests and Rulers would not have moved *Pilate*, it is likely, to condemn *Christ*; nor was it what the Multitude *affirmed* or *proved*, that moved him; but it was the Rage, the Importunity, the Madness of their Cries, that threatned Mutiny, and Tumult, and Confusion of all, that constrained this fearful Governor to give him up, even when he was determined to let him go. Shall not the People answer for this? Shall all this go for nothing? All this shall not excuse the Governor; but it shall make the People guilty, in part, of *Christ's* Blood. They should have had their share of Guilt, had they not willingly cried out—*his Blood be upon us*; they drew it on themselves, by calling for his Death, because their Leaders bid them. *See ye to it*—will not excuse *Pilate*; but yet the People must see to it. *I have* (said *Judas* to the Priests) *betrayed the innocent Blood*—*What is that to us*, said the Priests to *Judas*, *see thou to that*. But yet it was to them, and a great deal too, to have encouraged, dealt with, and agreed to hire that treacherous Servant. Mistake not; all that have their Hands in Wickedness, must see to it; but some have more, and some have lesser share in it; but every one too much by all, and every one must answer for it. It is not so easy to wash out Guilt, as to contract it, or excuse it lightly. *Pilate* may say,—I was constrained by Fears of Tumult and Disorders, that might possibly have occasioned the Death of many People; But that will not excuse him, even to himself. The People may singly plead, they were but in the Crowd, and did as others did, call out for Crucifixion, without Malice, but as they were bid. Our Saviour told *Pilate*, that he who had delivered him into his Hands, had the *greater* Sin; but he, it seems, had *some*; and therefore was not excused for yielding to the Importunities of the Priests and People, against his Conscience; nor could the People be excused for calling for his Crucifixion, and putting that Force on *Pilate*. Thus Men bring Guilt on one another, but do not clear themselves. What therefore may be learned in general from hence, is, that as Magistrates, and such as undertake to do Justice, are to hazard their own Security, in order to discharge their Duty, and are not to be diverted from the right way, by Hope or Fear, by Favour or Affection, nor will be excused by Threats and dreadful Apprehensions—so neither must the People be excited by subtle and designing Men to gather into Routs; nor when they are there, be inspirited to meddle with publick Matters, defame, complain of, or accuse the Names that are put into their Heads, nor call for Justice, or the Removal of they know not whom; for, however little Mischief they intend, they will be partly guilty, and partly answerable for what follows: They make themselves Instruments of mutinous, unjust, and cruel Spirits, and must give Account, as far as they are concerned, in bringing their ill Designs to pass. There is nothing better for all private People, than to study to be quiet, and do their own Business, and let the publick Affairs be managed by those who are to look after them, and must be



be answerable for their Miscarriage. For see, *in the next place*, into how great Mischief these poor People of the *Jews* were plunged, by being so unnecessarily busied, and underhand excited by their Leading Masters, this Day to *destroy Jesus*. The Governor would fain have let him go; this they are bid to exclaim against most furiously; and when this would not do, he calls for Water to wash his Hands of the Blood of that just Person—and in a very solemn Manner (since Guilt must lie somewhere) would lay it upon *Them*, whose Importunity forced him, unwilling, to condemn him—*See ye to it*. This they immediately took upon them—*His Blood be upon us and our Children*—the Guilt and Punishment be ours, if there be any due to this Desire of his Crucifixion; let us, and our Posterity, bear the Smart, and the Burthen of this Fault, if it be any. This was a great deal more than they intended, when either Zeal, or Idleness, or Curiosity, drew them out in the Morning: They came, it is possible, only to be Spectators of what would happen that Day; but there, by Artifice, they were drawn in to be Petitioners, that *Christ* might die; this they submitted to: And now when *Pilate* would not be guilty of the Blood of one whom he thought innocent, they will needs substitute themselves and their Posterity in his stead. This, you see, was plainly what they came not to engage in; but fell into by a most unfortunate Opportunity, by being in ill Company, and in a Place where they had nothing to do. But what a strange and dreadful Imprecation was it? Their Law had told them, God would certainly require the Blood of innocent People at the Hands of those who shed it. And did the Man whose Blood they were about to shed, appear as yet guilty? They knew they had sought out Witnesses, and had suborned them to swear against him; but after all, their Witnesses did not agree, so that he could not legally be found guilty; and every Man is innocent, till he be legally found otherwise. What is it then but *Murder*, to desire his Death, even when the Laws acquit him? And yet these Rulers who suborned these Witnesses, (which yet could not come home) call for the Guilt of Blood upon themselves and Children. Well! it is a fatal Thing to engage at first in any bad Design; for Men are usually so proud and stomachful, that they will stick at nothing, rather than that Design should be defeated, and their Credit lost. They will make good one *Calumny* by another, rather than be accounted *Liars* and *Defamers*; they will follow an *Accusation* with *Subornation*, rather than fall from their Point, and are more careful of their Honour than their Conscience: They could not at first believe they should hazard so much to bring about their Purposes; but when they are once in, they will hazard all, rather than not go through.

But, supposing the Priests and Rulers were truly perswaded, that *Jesus* deserved by their Law to die, and so would take it on themselves, although they wanted legal Evidence; yet, how could the Common People be thus sure that he deserved to die? And yet they take his Blood upon their Heads, as if they had, every Man of them, known him truly guilty. One may believe the Judge is uncorrupt, the Jury very honest, and the Witnesses true and faithful; and yet a Spectator would be loth to take the Blood of a condemned Person upon his Head, for fear some Fraud, or some Mistake, might be committed. What Madness is it to concern our selves in Cases that belong not to us? But why, of all Things in the World, will Men engage their Children and Posterity in Curses, *upon Supposition*? Why will they venture and defy the Vengeance of God upon themselves and Children, upon the Certainty of the Guilt of a Person, whom neither Witnesses could *prove*, nor the Judge would *pronounce—Guilty*? Man is a strange Creature when enraged! A strange Creature, when under the Power of any Passion! He thinks of nothing but the present Inclination, whether to love or hate; and he will gratify it, at what Expence or Hazard soever. These People mean not certainly the



Mischiefs that they imprecate, but only mean to be believed in what they then affirm; but they speak to one who hears; they call on God, who will not be so dealt with, but who will sometimes take them at their Word, and hear and grant those Prayers that will undo them; but evermore with Justice. *He will visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, and he will shew Mercy to Thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments.* This is a plain Proof, that there is such a Relation betwixt one Generation and another, that Good or Evil is derived from one to the other, *i. e.* temporal Prosperity or Misfortune; (for it touches not the Soul, we may be sure) and both these Things are for the Encouragement of Virtue and Religion, and grounded on that strong Affection Parents bear to Children, and to the inextinguishable Desires they have of doing them good, and warding them from Mischief. You love your Children, and your Childrens Children, and even as far as you can see in Wishes; and would do almost any thing to procure their Welfare—Keep the Commands of God, and live virtuously, and walk holily before him; for, *He shews Mercy to Thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments:* And if you would not bring Evil upon their Heads, nor cause them to be visited in Wrath, see that you live your selves in all Obedience to his Laws—for *he will visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him.*

We may well presume upon the Justice of God, in these Proceedings, without staying to speak to it now; and therefore it need not seem strange, if God did really punish the Children of these enraged Petitioners for *Christ's* Death, as they desired, and deserved he should. The fore Calamities That People endured for many Years, both before and after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, might every Day assure them, that God heard the dreadful Imprecation of their Parents and Ancestors—*His Blood be on us, and on our Children.* And truly, whoever will consider the Fortune of that poor People, from that unhappy Hour to this, throughout the World, will think that Cry is still, as it were, in God's Ears. They have been miserable beyond Expression; they have been for more than Sixteen Hundred Years without City, without Temple, without High Priest, without Sacrifice, without Prince; scattered through all the Countries of the World, and low, depressed, and in Subjection every where: They own themselves, that they are under God's Displeasure; but they see or acknowledge not the Cause. They are as obstinate, and fierce, and virulent against the *Name of Christ*, as their Forefathers were against his *Person*; so that they vindicate the Justice of God's Inflictions, by continuing on the Cause, and by their outrageous Infidelity, will not let his Anger cease from them: They tread in their Father's Steps, they are not only as wicked and immoral as they were, but by continued Blasphemies and Impieties, still persecute and crucify the Son of God, and draw his Blood upon their Heads: They are the most inveterate Enemies of *Christ* and his Religion through the World. All People else are Enemies by Interest and by Accident; but the *Jews* by Principle and Choice. The Followers of *Mahomet* speak most respectfully of *Isa*, *i. e.* *Jesus*, and say, that he shall save his Followers, if they are sincerely faithful, and obedient to his Precepts, (and he who says otherwise, says wrong.) The *Jews* blaspheme and curse his sacred Name on all Occasions, not mentioning the same with Decency or Patience. Should we not reckon this one of the heaviest Curses that can fall upon them? *Is not this Blood* most fearfully *upon them and their Children*? Let us learn at least from hence, not to give way to Rage, nor in our Madness, involve our Children and Posterity in dreadful Curses and Misfortunes. Let every Generation bear its own Burthen; sufficient to the Day will be the Evil thereof; our Sins will entitle them to enough of God's Vengeance, if he be not very merciful: *Remember not Lord our Iniquities, nor*  
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*the Iniquities of our Forefathers, neither take thou Vengeance of them*—is what we ask daily of God. We must not therefore ask him by our Imprecations, to remember us in visiting our Children: But this we do, when we devote them to his Wrath, if such and such Things are not true; which yet, perhaps, are false, at least uncertain; or if we are not innocent, when perhaps our Hearts assure us we are guilty, but we will say these Things to serve some present Turn, and save our Credit.

These Uses we may make of this Part of the Relation of our Saviour's Passion. Each Day of the following Week, will furnish us with more and more Considerations of the like Nature; nor can we use the Time and History better, than to consider the Particulars attentively, and make as proper Applications as we can of each of them to our own Condition.

Few People but approve of *Pilate's* Care and Purpose to acquit our Lord, because he thought him innocent; and all condemn his falling from that Purpose, though under Force and Fear, and apprehensive of great Dangers. And who is there among us all, that has not made as honest and becoming Resolutions of discharging well his Duty in this and that particular Occurrence; yet has not fainted upon Trial, yielded, if not to Fear, yet to some other Passion that has overborn his Reason, and made him act against his settled Judgment? And yet has faintly tried to wash his Hands in Innocency, by some poor Plea or other, in Excuse of what he did; that hardly satisfies himself, much less impartial Standers-by. As easily as we part with it, we are very much made for Innocence; we would have every body think us in possession of it; we are perpetually trying to recover it to our selves, by framing Excuses for what is past, that will, we think, diminish from the Guilt; and I believe, whatever be the Purchase, we think we have given up too much for it. Hear the Conclusion of this Man. These very *Jews*, to whose outrageous Cries he gave up *Christ*, within a few Years, complained of his Government to *Vitellius*, then the *President* of *Syria*, who put him out, and sent him to *Rome* to answer for his Misdemeanours: But before he reached that Place, *Tiberius Cæsar* died, and his Successor sent him, by way of Banishment, to *Vienne*, a City of *France*, upon the *Rhône*; where he lived despised and miserable for five or six Years, and then dispatched himself by his own Hands. I dare not venture to affirm how far the Divine Vengeance was concerned in pursuing this unhappy Man; but I dare venture to affirm, that had he followed but the Dictates of his Reason and Conscience in releasing *Christ*, whom he thought innocent, the Accusations of the *Jews* of other Faults, had been less burthen some to his Mind; *Cæsar's* Displeasure, and his Banishment, would have been born much better. Let but an exiled Man carry his Innocence and a good Conscience with him, and he will find his Native Country, Wife and Children, Friends and Comforts, wheresoever he shall go, *i. e.* he shall be happy in the Approbation of God above, and of his Heart within, which will be to him every thing he stands in need of. To make an end—Whatever we think of *Pilate*, we are sure that we our selves at least are innocent of the Blood of this just Person; and are amazed to think how dreadful a Curse these People laid themselves under, by calling for the Blood of *Christ* upon their Heads. But neither are we innocent our selves of the Blood of this just Person; for they were certainly our Sins, the Sins of the World, that did not only want, but occasion the Death of *Christ*; nor do we less than call for the Blood of *Christ* upon our Heads, when we are impious and incredulous, and obdurately impenitent. The Scriptures speak of some, and Christians too, that *crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame; that trod him under foot, counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and did despite to the Spirit of Grace*, Heb. vi. 6. x. 29. when yet that Son of God was seated on his Throne in Heaven, out of the Reach of human Insolence and Injury. In a word,



word, that Blood will be *upon our Heads*, whether we call for it or no, if (as the Scripture speaks) *our Hearts are not* beforehand *sprinkled with it, from an Evil Conscience*, i. e. without a Figure: That precious Blood of *Christ* which was shed upon the Cross, to merit and obtain Redemption and Forgiveness of our Sins, upon Discharge of the Condition called for at our Hands, namely, our Faith, Repentance, and Amendment; will be so far from doing it, without Discharge of those Conditions, that it will raise our Guilt and Condemnation to the highest Pitch, and make it much more tolerable for *Pilate*, and these Priests and Governors, and poor unhappy People, in the Day of Judgment, than for us.

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A SERMON



## S E R M O N

Preached before the Right Honourable the LORDS  
Spiritual and Temporal, on *January* the 30<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>09</sup><sub>10</sub>.  
at *Westminster-Abbey*.

2 KINGS, Chap. VIII. Ver. 13.

*And Hazael said, But what is thy Servant, a Dog, that he should do this great Thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me, that thou shalt be King of Syria.*

**T**H E King of *Syria* being Sick, and hearing that a Prophet of the Lord was at *Damascus*, sent his Servant *Hazael* with a very liberal Present to him, to enquire of God, by him, whether he should recover of his Disease. To this great Messenger, the Prophet answers—*Go say unto him—Thou may'st certainly recover; howbeit, the Lord hath shewed me, that he shall surely die.* Would the Prophet here have *Hazael* tell a Lie, and say his Lord should live, when he was certain he would die, being told so by the Prophet? Or does he rather say, You will hardly be so ill a Courtier, as to tell the King, that he shall die; you will leave so unwelcome a Message to any other, and rather chuse to say, *Thou may'st certainly recover*, although I know very well he never shall recover, and tell you so, from God. This Sense is natural and easy enough; but the Words do not say it expressly enough. Or, does he bid him speak what is certainly true, if supplied with somewhat that *Elisha* knew very well? Go and say to your Prince, *Thou may'st certainly recover*, i. e. from this Disease, which in itself may not be mortal, *Howbeit, the Lord hath shewed me, that he shall surely die*, i. e. by another Hand, after another manner; the former Part *Hazael* was to say to *Benbadad*, the latter *Elisha* said to *Hazael*, and each of them was true; for *Benbadad* might have recovered, had not *Hazael* murdered him. If therefore we respect the *Distemper* only, it was true that the Prophet bid him say—*Thou may'st certainly recover*; but if we respect the *Event*, which God saw, and discovered to the Prophet, it was also true, that *the King should certainly die*. What the Prophet said, was certainly true in this Sense, and we ought to take the Words in any other Sense, than such a one as would make a holy Prophet the Author of a Falshood. When he had spoken these Words, the Prophet settled his Countenance so stedfastly, looked so long and so intensely upon *Hazael*, that he was perfectly confounded; and the Prophet himself burst into Tears. *Hazael* asked him, What it was that occasioned such a strange Emotion, and why he wept? The Prophet told him, it was to see, and consider, what mighty Mischiefs he, in time, would bring upon *Israel*, how he would fire their strong Holds, slay their young Men with the Sword, dash in pieces their poor Infants, and rip up their Women with Child. To whom *Hazael* replies, in the Words of the Text—*But what is thy Servant, A Dog; that he should do this great Thing?* How is it possible that I, so mean and inconsiderable a Person, should ever attain to the Power of doing so great Matters, as you mention? But



had I now the Power, how were it possible I should commit such barbarous and such brutish Outrages? Account me not, I pray thee, *a Dog*, and so inhuman. But *Elisha answered—The Lord hath shewed me; that thou shalt be King of Syria.* Thou wilt, by that Means, have the Power of doing all this Evil; and thou wilt change thy Mind with thy Condition; and then *thy Will*, will be *the King of Syria's Will*, which is, to increase their Power, and to oppress their Neighbours to the utmost; the inveterate Enmity that has long reigned betwixt the *Syrians* and the *Jews*, will be revived, and carried by thee to Extremity.

This is the Meaning of the Text, as in Conjunction with the History. The Uses of which, that I intend to make at present, will be these—

*First*, To observe how little we know our own selves.

*Secondly*, To consider whether this Prediction of the Prophet, that *Hazael* should be King, will in any sort excuse the Means he used to make himself so. And, *Lastly*, To make what Application may be proper.

*First*, It is very obvious to observe from hence, how little we know our own selves. There is no Reason to think that *Hazael* was not in good earnest, when he would not have the Prophet (nor could himself) believe he should, in time, commit such Cruelties as were foretold. But Man is a reasonable Creature, and as God has made him *capable* of doing it, so he has *obliged* him to consider the Consequences of his Actions, and how naturally one thing follows from another. He who breaks down the Banks of a great Water, occasions the Overflow; it may be, of a great deal of Ground, the Fall of a House, the Death of a Child, and the Drowning of many Cattle. *Who would have thought it?* is a Fool's Excuse, when things follow naturally, closely, or easily: And *I intended no such Mischief*, is as idle, where Mischief was likely to follow, though you should intend never so well. Men must intend well, and do well, if they would be safe, where Intentions have no immediate Influence on the Action or the Agent.

Now if a Man who actually intends well, shall yet be answerable for the Mischief that is done, by an unreasonable and foolish Choice of Means improper and unfit, we may conclude, he shall be accountable for the Evil he does, *without* any good Intention: If therefore I intend to do no Mischief, I must not put my self in the way of doing any; I must avoid the Occasion and Temptation of entering into Evil, if I would be innocent. A Man knows his own Mind and Purpose at present; and sees how he stands determined by his present Circumstances; he is now innocent, and likes the being so; and finding it so full of Ease and Satisfaction, he resolves so to continue: Let him then take heed of falling into any such Courses, as will insensibly draw him off from these good Purposes, and put him, by degrees, on Practices he now abhors. He is now possessed with a religious Fear of God, and sanctifies his Name, and reverences his Word, and will prophane neither; and should you tell him, he will be a common Swearer, an impious, execrable Man, and great Blasphemer, he would think it strange, if not impossible; his Heart abhors such Thoughts, he trembles at the Mention of such wicked things, and would account himself *a Dog*, if he should do them. But in a little time, he falls into such Company, as make no Difficulty of these Matters, and accustom him to bear them patiently, at least in others; and he himself ventures a little, and then draws back with some Confusion; remembers the good Principles that his religious Parents at first instilled into him, and which his good Instructors after cultivated carefully; and these Rebukes keep him some time in tolerable Order; he will not resolve to leave the Company, but will not be infected by it, nor be led by their Example: But these Resolves last not long in full Force, but yield, by little and little, to Custom and Example; he takes in time the Manners of his Company, and becomes the



the Man, whose Image frightened him not long ago. So People stare at new Fashions; and are, at first, amazed to see things so fantastical and odd; but, by degrees, they fall into them, and become in a little time *Standards* themselves. There is no trusting to one's present Mind and Resolution, though never so reasonable and good, unless we will take all Care to avoid the Occasions and Temptations that will naturally change them. It is no great matter, to resolve never to fall into the *greatest* Sins that Men can possibly commit; the very Apprehension of those huge Enormities, is hard and painful to the Mind; but, however, a Man is not secure, who puts himself into the Way that leads thither, though it be at great Distance. The present Designs of Men have, it may be, no Eye or Tendency to such and such a Consequence; but, however, Men must look to it; for when we are once out of the right Way, every Step we take, leads us but into farther Wandrings, and we know not whither we are going. If one had asked of *David*, Whether he, when he first gazed on *Bathsheba*, in her Retirements; intended to murder the bravest Man he had in his Kingdom, in the most vile and treacherous Manner, with all the Circumstances of Baseness, Folly, and huge Wickedness, that can attend an Action? Doubtless, he would have thought it utterly impossible, that such a Villany should have ever found any Place in his great Heart. But yet we see, that that adulterous Look ended in that strange Murder, and left a lasting Blemish upon his Life and Honour. In vain do People think of going just to such a Pitch of Wickedness, and no farther; either their Hopes of gaining some farther Security, or their Fears of falling into greater Danger, engage them in new Designs, whose Consequences they attend not to: And when a Man is gone but half way, he looks back, and wonders often how he got so far; but new Necessities arise, and carry him on he knows not whither; he commits a new Offence to justify a former, and this will require another to secure itself. A Man no more knows where to stop in Sin and Error, than he can ascertain his Charge in either *Law* or *Building*; he is trained on by new Emergencies, beyond what he at first proposed or designed, and all is lost, he thinks, if he goes not through with it; and at last, he finds himself almost undone, who at first intended a little Pleasure or Convenience only, or to do himself some Justice, or his Adversary a small Ill Turn. We find how we are carried unaccountably from Things good and innocent, to Things indifferent, and from thence to Things suspicious, and that want Justification; and from thence to such as will not bear it; and much more certain are these wicked Consequences, when we begin with Things unlawful; the wisest Man alive cannot tell where he is to end. *The Heart is deceitful above all Things, who can know it?* We have therefore no Security against our falling into the very Depths of Hell, but our great Care and Watchfulness to keep within the Bounds of Innocence at first, and to consider well the Consequence of every Action and Undertaking, and to trust but little to our present Mind and Resolutions, which every little Accident *can* and *will* alter. One may safely say, no wicked Man did ever intend to arrive to the Pitch he is now at of Wickedness; but gradually, and by Progression, one Sin drew on another; and he has lost his first Views; the Purposes of his Heart were daily changed by new and fatal Opportunities, that, from one Commission to another, drew him to the miserable Point he is now at. A Man can hardly think he is capable of doing what, in a little time, he will glory in having done; and justify to Death, what he once would have chosen to die, rather than do. So little do most People know what they are made of; or rather, what their Passions may in time make them, without the greatest Care, Jealousy, and Watchfulness over their own Hearts possible; so little do they observe (till it be too late) how they are trained from one thing to another, till they are lost, out of their Depth, and past returning.

It cannot enter into *Hazael's* Heart, that he should ever have the *Power* of doing all these mighty Mischiefs, that the Prophet read in his bad Lines and Features with a Flood



Flood of Tears; or, that, supposing he were able, he should ever *incline* to commit such cruel and unheard-of Outrages: Rip up the teeming Women, and dash against the Stones the innocent and unprovoking Children; forgetful of his Mother, and the Pledges of his Love at home! How can such inhuman Thoughts be harboured in a Heart of Flesh, which is the Seat of Pity? The Prophet told him, That he saw he would be King; and home he goes and kills his Master, reigns in his stead, and is provided of the *Power*, to do the great foretold Mischiefs. Had the Prophet told him, That his Sorrows broke out at his Eyes in the violent manner he saw and was confounded at, to think how treacherously he would murder his Prince, that trusted him with the Care and Conservation of his Health and Life, it is probable he would have bid him look for better Things from him, and not account him such a faithless Villain; and yet there were not many Days betwixt his doubting how he could attain the Power of doing so much Mischief, and his attaining it, by murdering of his King. When mounted on his Master's Throne by these bad Means, what shall he do to turn the Peoples Minds from considering how he came to sit there, but divert them by a War abroad, revive the ancient Enmity betwixt the *Syrians* and the *Jews*, renew their ancient Claims, and shew the greatest Zeal to recover the Honour they had lately lost by *Benbadad*? And to this purpose, he must breathe nothing but Slaughter, the total ruin of the *Jews*, the firing their Strong-holds, dashing their Infants on the Ground, ripping their Women up with Child, and putting all their young Men to the Sword, to extirpate utterly the Race of *Israel*, and rid the *Syrians* of their old inveterate Enemies. And thus his *Power* inspires him with the *Will* of doing what he could not bear to think on, when the Prophet told him what would come to pass; and this hard *Will* is necessary now, he fancies, to maintain his *Power*. His Ambition at first dipped his Hands in his Master's Blood; and then to wash out that foul Stain, he must do something popular; he must be cruelly zealous against his Countries Enemies, to divert his People from enquiring after their Prince's Death; and make Atonement for his Treachery, by barbarous War, and by prodigious Slaughters. Thus does one Depth of Sin call for another, and he who trusts his Heart with one unlawful Passion, will find it will make way for many other Guests; such as he never thought of entertaining.

Let his Example therefore instruct us to look to our selves, whilst we are innocent; never so to trust the Resolutions of our Mind, though reasonable and calm, as to neglect the natural and the necessary Means of preserving our selves in that good Temper; never to think our Opinions will not alter with our Circumstances; believing our selves Temptation-proof, only because we know we should be so, and intend to be so; but carefully avoiding all such Opportunities as may betray us into those Commissions, which we now abhor; and never to believe it is within our Power to stop at this Offence, or this Degree of Sin, and go no farther. If we will make this Use of *Hazael's* Example, we may go on to consider, in the *Second Place*, Whether this Prediction of the Prophet, that *Hazael* should be King, and should commit these Cruelties, will in any sort excuse the Means he took to become King, or the Cruelties he committed when he was so.

There is Reason enough to think, that his having been anointed by *Elijah*, (or designed for King by God's Appointment, with that Ceremony) and his being now told by *Elisha* that he would, one Day, be the King of *Syria*; there is Reason enough to think, that this preparatory Unction, and this Prediction, did indeed occasion *Hazael* to dispatch his Master. Ambitious Minds, void of the Fear of God, are forward enough of themselves to undertake the greatest Wickedness, to attain their Ends; but when they have the Countenance of *Inspiration* on their Side, then nothing can discourage or restrain them; they look upon themselves as called by God, to execute his Purpose  
and



and Decree ; and Negligence is Disobedience, and Delay is Sinful ; they do not think they are to wait for God's Time, or expect that He should bring his Purposes to pass, by Means and Methods of his own ; but will precipitate Events, and fancy every thing is lawful, that conduces to the End declared by God. *Jebu* was thus anointed by a Prophet, and told by him, what he should do to all the House of *Abab* ; but this was all, not by the way of *foretelling* what *Jebu* would incline to do, and do, when he was King ; but by the way of *Command*, to inform him what God exacted of him, and expected from him. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I have anointed thee King over the People of the Lord, even over Israel ; and thou shalt smite the House of Abab thy Master, that I may avenge the Blood of my Servants the Prophets, and the Blood of all the Servants of the Lord, at the Hand of Jezebel.* There is no reading this without the seeing a Commission from God, to put his Orders in Execution ; and he accordingly destroyed the House of *Abab*, and became King in his stead. And though he was not himself a good Man, yet he was God's Instrument, to avenge the Blood of his Prophets ; and since he received so positive and express Orders to do what he did, I do not see, but he was so far blameless, as he performed the Will of God, without going beyond his Commission ; if he exceeded *that*, and indulged any thing to his Ambition, cruel Inclinations, or particular Revenge, he will want to be justified, though what he did might also tend to the bringing about the Purpose of God, in rooting up the House of *Abab*. As Men may certainly be guilty of cruel and revengeful Purposes, known to their own Hearts, though they are prosecuting a just Cause, by just and legal Methods. But this, I imagine, was not *Hazael's* Case ; the Prophet had anointed him for King, or he was told by him, that he should certainly be King of *Syria* ; the Meaning of which, was one of these two Things ; either that God had positively designed he should be King ; or foresaw what Courses he would take to make himself so, and foretold the *Event*, that so it would be, without declaring the *Means*. If the Prophet anointed him King, and designed he should be so ; yet he did not bid him take the Courses he took to become King. He anointed him beforehand ; but he was to expect God's Time, and to wait till it could innocently come to pass. But if God only shewed the Prophet, that *Hazael* would be King of *Syria*, (which the Prophet also told to *Hazael*) then can we only conclude safely, that God well knew, and foresaw that *Hazael* would take the Courses to become King, which he after took, without directing, or approving them. And as God's Prescience did not by any means necessitate or constrain him to such Murther of his Master, so neither will the Prediction of the Prophet justify his coming to the Crown by any such Means ; any more than *Christ's* foretelling *Peter's* Denial, and *Judas's* Treachery, either compelled them to it, or will excuse them for it. God (who sees whatever Motives can occur to our Minds, and sees how they will influence and move) gives us our Liberty to chuse ; and knows which way we shall incline, and what our Choice will be, and can communicate the Event without constraining, or having constrained our Wills to make such Choice ; and having this Foreknowledge, can determine these Events to serve such and such Purposes, as he sees fit ; and yet the Blame shall lye upon the Instruments, if they either propose a wicked *End*, or pitch on wicked *Means* to compass a good End by. We know that God intended to punish the Revolts and Apostacies of his People, and that by the Hand of *Hazael*, who, when King of *Syria*, would commit unheard-of Cruelties, and execute the severest Vengeance on the *Jews*. How easily may this be turned ? That God foreseeing what Courses *Hazael* would take to become King, and when so, would turn his Arms on *Judah* with the greatest Violence ; whose Sins and Provocations were so high, that he would suffer them to fall into his Hands, and let them see and know he used him as an Instrument to punish their Offences. This he might justly do, yet *Hazael* be exceeding faulty, as well in the Courses he took to become



King, as in the Cruelties he would exercise against the *Jews*, when he was so. It is worth our while to observe what God says, *Isa. x. 5. O Assyrian, the Rod of mine Anger, and the Staff in their Hand is mine Indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical Nation, and against the People of my Wrath will I give him a Charge to take the Spoil, and take the Prey, and to tread them down like the Mire of the Streets. Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his Heart think so, but it is in his Heart to destroy, and to cut off Nations, not a few.* And in *Ver. 12. Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole Work upon Mount Zion and Jerusalem, I will punish the Fruit of the stout Heart of the King of Assyria, and the Glory of his high Looks.* From whence we may conclude, That God sometimes makes use of Instruments to bring his purpose to effect, who yet know nothing of it, but are guided by Motives of their own, and shall be punished for so doing: They shall account to God for the Means they chose to attain their End, though both the Means and End were effectual to bring about his Will. The Prescience then of God, and the Prediction of the Prophet, will not excuse *Hazael* for murdering his Master, to become King, nor the Cruelties he committed, when so, although those Cruelties were the Executions of God's just Anger. Let us call to Mind the Example of a much better Man than either *Hazael*, or *Jehu*, and that is *David*. This Man had also been anointed King by *Samuel*, the standing Prophet of his Time; and that before a great Company, and *Saul* was known to be rejected of the Lord; and yet he would not put his Hand to forward his Advancement to any thing unlawful; though he had all the Advantages and favourable Opportunities that any Man could wish for, to put him in Possession of God's Promises: *Saul* was his declared Enemy, and fought his Life on all Occasions, by ways unworthy of him, and such as would, if any could, have justified Revenge; and God had twice delivered *Saul* into his Hands; but *David* still neglected all his Opportunities, and would not become a King by any Means that were not strictly justifiable. He left it to God, to fulfil his own Promises, by his own Methods, and at his own appointed Time. If God designed him for a Crown, (as by his Unction, certainly he did) let him so place it on his Head, as it shall sit secure and easy. He will be instrumental to fulfil the Will of God, in making him a King, no otherwise, than by doing what was fit to do, had there been no such Promise. *The Lord shall smite him, or his Day shall come to die, or he shall descend into Battle and perish—But God forbid that I should smite the Lord's Anointed.* See how a Man of God fulfils a Prophecy! The Words and Anointing of *Samuel* were as certain, positive, and determinate to *David*, as the Unction of *Elijah*, and the Prediction of *Elisha*, were to *Hazael*, that he should be King. But the different Heart makes different Application: The Grace and Fear of God, and Sense of Duty and of Honour, suggests to *David*, he must stay for God's appointed Season, who best knows how, and when to accomplish his own Promises; whereas the *other* takes the Word just from the Prophet's Mouth, and gives it to his own ambitious Heart to read and explain; that Heart replies immediately,—The God that gave this Oracle, had given him now the Opportunity of making it good. He shall be King of *Syria*—How can that be, whilst his Master lives? When is his Master nearer Death, than when exceeding sick? And how much less of Life could he ever lose than now? He must not now be wanting to himself. Go tell your Master, the Prophet says, from God, that *He shall live*; but then remember that he says, *You shall be King*, i. e. He is to live as long as you please. Is not this to fulfil the Will of God, since it is impossible you should be King, whilst your Master lives? Let any Passion that we have, pretend to explain God's Promises, and it shall certainly give them its own Turn; it will fulfil the Will of God, according to its own. A Promise therefore of something to come, without a positive Command of God, to execute it in such a certain manner as is expressed, will never justify a Man's fulfilling it by any other



other Methods than what are strictly lawful, and justifiable of themselves. Which brings me again to this Conclusion, That the Prediction of *Elisha*, that *Hazael* should be King of *Syria*, will not justify the wicked Courses he took to become King; nor the being foretold what Cruelties he should afterwards commit when King, justify those Cruelties.

Let us see, *in the Last Place*, What Use may be made, by the way of Application, of what hath been said on these Heads. *This Day* reminds us of the huge and numberless Calamities the People of this Kingdom underwent from a long, unnatural War amongst our selves; and reminds us of an everlasting Stain laid on the Honour of the *English* Nation, by adjudging their *King* to *Death*, against all *Reason*, all *Law*, and all *Example* of our Ancestors. Nor did our Miseries end here; that execrable Day concluded only the Misfortunes of that Prince; neither his Friends nor Enemies ceased to suffer with him. Such an atrocious, impious Fact, must (as it did) call for a world of Lives, and Liberties, and Confiscations of Estate, and other cruel and vexatious Oppressions of our Countrymen; and laid the Foundation of such an Enmity, as is, I fear, to last for ever. Had any one foretold what Miseries these unhappy People would bring upon their Nation, I make no doubt, they would have soon returned, with *Hazael*, *But what is thy Servant a Dog, that he should do these great Things?* Yet many now alive remember well they did them. I see no Reason to believe, that any single Man, or Party whatever, could intend, at first, the Evils they afterwards effected; but I do not see that this is so much an Excuse for *Them*, as a great Matter of Caution to *Others*, how they at first embroil Publick Affairs, and enter on the weighty Matters of reforming Church or State, though with a good Design enough; but yet by Methods illegal and untryed. It is only God can say to the Waves, *Hitherto shall ye go, and no farther*; and so it is with *the Madness of the People*; a little Matter will inflame a Multitude, when a Hundred Men that can render a Reason, shall not be able to dismiss it peaceably: Small are the Beginnings of the greatest Mischiefs. But Men are at their Liberty to act, and shall answer for their Actions; and they are capable of seeing, and considering Consequences, and therefore are accountable for the Neglect of doing so, when Mischiefs follow probably, and easily, and commonly. The good Intentions of the *Heart* will secure the *Heart*; but I am not able to say, with Certainty enough, how far they will authorize the Executions of the *Hand*; even those that follow immediately, and are in Nature and Reason fitted to obtain the End of those Intentions: But in this I will be confident, that the first good Intentions will not reach all subsequent Acts that are not good. Let some, of all Conditions, be presumed to enter on our Wars with good Intentions, and others with no bad ones; (and I think he must be much a Stranger to our Story, that will not allow of this) though we may see, perhaps, that the Virtue and Innocence of these People's Intentions may go far to justify those Actions that were immediately influenced and governed by those Intentions; (although those People should have been mistaken;) yet who can see, that those *prime* Intentions are to justify all the Actions that followed, with all their several Consequences? I hope, with my whole Heart, that all who had occasion to re-consider the Share they had in bringing so many dreadful Mischiefs on their Country, when they thought of repenting, sought not for Justification from their first honourable and good Intentions, but had Recourse to the sure Sanctuary, the Mercies of God in *Jesus Christ*. I own it, I would rather cover, if I could, than exaggerate the Offences of our Fathers, with respect to the Wars that occasioned so much Misery to this Nation, and laid the Foundation of that fatal Tragedy, that makes *this Day* so hard to be forgotten, and so hard to be remembred. But I would not that any one should think he came off innocent, because he entered on at first with laudable Designs and good Intentions; without con-



considering how many intervening Acts were cruel and outrageous; and how he was trained on by slow, insensible Degrees, to be instrumental in abundance of barbarous and brutal Facts; to embrue his Hands, at last, in innocent and sacred Blood, and to the enslaving of his Country. Who should then have said——“ You are now angry  
 “ with some needless *Ceremonies*, which yet are fewer, and more decent, than ever  
 “ were in use in any Christian Church, protected by the *State*, for thirteen hundred  
 “ Years, and without which no Christian Church did ever yet serve God in Publick,  
 “ that we know of: Angry to have a *Form of Publick Prayer* prescribed, proper and  
 “ suited to the Wants of all Christians, though you may use what Liberty you will in  
 “ your retired and *Family-Devotions* betwixt God and you: And to get rid of these so  
 “ easy Impositions, you will pull down all the Fences that secure the Christian *Faith*  
 “ and *Discipline*, and let in Wolves and Foxes, that will prey upon the Christian Flock,  
 “ and bring in Heresies, and all licentious Errors, and drive away the Shepherds that  
 “ should feed them and secure them; extirpate an *Order* that is as old as Christianity  
 “ within this Kingdom, and put a Thousand and a Thousand Families to seek their  
 “ Bread in desolate Places. You are now jealous and tenacious of your *Liberties*; but,  
 “ by the Courses you are taking to secure them and enlarge them, you, in time, will  
 “ come to take them away from every one besides, and lose them your selves at last:  
 “ You will raise *Armies*, and become their Subjects; make to your selves Captains of  
 “ Thousands and Ten Thousands, and submit your Necks to their imperious Orders;  
 “ involve your Country in Desolation, and much Blood; trample down ancient *Honour*  
 “ and *Nobility*; disperse your *Princes* into Foreign Countries, where they shall take  
 “ up Manners that you hate, Maxims destructive of your Liberty, and a Religion you  
 “ abhor: Vanquish your *King*; deprive him of his Friends and Servants; distress him  
 “ to Distraction; force him to fly into the very Arms of Mischief, from whence you  
 “ will redeem him, like a Slave, to cast him into Fetters of your own; despoil him of  
 “ his Regal Honours; straitly imprison him; and put him to the Sword at last, (Horror  
 “ to think upon!) with all the Circumstances of Scorn and Ignominy possible. These  
 “ are the Things that you will do to secure your *Christian* and *Civil Liberties*.” Who should thus have Prophesied, should certainly have had my Text returned upon him—  
*What is thy Servant a Dog, that he should do these great things?* Yet these great Things were done; and in a manner worse than I express them. These great Things are past and gone; and I have no worse Purpose in remembring them, than to advise, that all who had no Hand therein, should be as careful to avoid all manner of Occasions of Evil, as they, we think, ought to have been, who were the most concerned in them. I apprehend no Cause of *Fear*, and therefore know not how to give any *Caution* of falling into those enormous Crimes, that make *this Day* the blackest in our *Kalendar*, excepting *One*, with which I never dare compare it: But there is need of all imaginable Caution, that People do not readily engage in Matters of Importance, especially relating to the Publick, trusting to good Intentions only, and to the Mind they are at present in, without considering what may follow. Mens Heats are Heats of *Zeal* at first, benign and gentle; but little Accidents may raise them to a hot consuming Fire, that may, in time, destroy their Neighbours and themselves. It was the turbulent and restless Humour of private People, and the Conceit of their Abilities, thrusting themselves into publick Matters, and stirring up their Neighbours to complain, and shew themselves uneasy, that contributed a great deal to the Misfortune of those Days that brought this *Anniversary* amongst us, so grievous both to Friends and Enemies. And can we do a better Thing upon it, than advise all Men to *study to be quiet*, and do their own Business; to keep within their proper Compass; reform themselves, and all that are within their Care; but leave the publick Matters to the Hands to which they are entrusted; give no Disturbance to their Management, nor distract them from attending to the



the great Affairs, on which depends our very Civil Life and Being, by little private Differences, and poor Debates, that may be very safely laid aside for ever; or, at the least, suspended for a while, and easily resumed again, (if there be need) when the great Struggle of the World is over, and the Fortune of us and our Posterity decided.

The Application of the *latter* Part of the *Text*, to the Business of this Day, would carry me farther than I have either Time or Will to go. Those wicked Men had no Prophet sent to Them from God, to tell them what *great Things* would befall them; but yet there were not wanting Men that undertook to lead them, *by the Word of God*, to all the mischievous Designs imaginable. They were not tempted to engage in these Affairs, by any such Prediction as *Elisha* uttered to *Hazael*; but they found Men, in *Prophet's Cloathing*, that both excited them, and promised them Success, *in the Name of the Lord*. The Word of God, I own, was never worser used, by furious, ignorant, misguided (but still I hope, not prophane) Spirits. The *Word* of God can never contradict his *Will*, which is, that Peace and Righteousness, Truth and Goodness, should for ever flourish on the Earth, and that Men should live in Quiet, Order, and good Government, and enjoy the happy Fruit of that good Stock. And whenever you find the Scriptures leading Men into any Evil, or doing any Mischief to Mankind, especially to Government, you may be sure, they are misapplied, perverted and abused.

I fear I have already been too long; but yet must ask the Patience of two or three Minutes more, to say Two Things; which, if the *Text* should not, the *Day* will certainly bear me out in. The first is this—This Day is, through the excessive Partiality of some of both Sides, become a Day of great Trial to the Preachers; Talk of the *Duty*, *Honour*, and *Obedience* of the *Subject* to the *Prince*, and you are thought by some, to preach away the Peoples Liberties, and make them Slaves; Talk of the *Peoples Liberties*, and you are opening presently a Door to Mutiny, Disloyalty and flat Rebellion, with some others. They are both of them, God be thanked, in the wrong; and the Truth is (like our happy *Constitution*) betwixt them. The *Crown* has many and excellent *Prerogatives*, and will, I hope in God, never have less or fewer. The *People* have great *Liberties*, and will, I hope, deserve them, and enjoy them, whilst they are a People. Who are these *People* but our selves? All but the *Prince* are comprehended in that Word. The Priests must preach up, *Tribute to whom Tribute is due*, *Fear to whom Fear*, and *Honour to whom Honour*. And must affirm all that *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* have said, of Peoples *being subject to the Powers that are set over them, for Good*. They cannot else discharge their Duty; nor the People else enjoy the Benefits of a good Government. But may it not be lawful also for the Priests to tell the People, in proper Season, of their Liberties; and shew them wherein they are so happy, above all the People of the Earth besides? That they may understand, know how to value, be careful to preserve, and to continue to Posterity, and thank God for, these singular inestimable Blessings. May not these Things be said, without incurring the odious Brand of *stirring up Sedition and Rebellion*? I know not where these Things will end; but it is plain, they make it harder, than it need to be, for honest and sincere Men to do their Duty on these Occasions.

The other Thing that I would say, is this—That the Observation of *this Day* is become (like the Fifth of *November* to the *Papists*) exceeding grievous and distasteful to all *Dissenters*; as well for the Licence that (they say) is taken upon it, of inveighing against them; as for the Praises that are so liberally bestowed upon King *Charles*, which look, to some of them, as so many Exprobrations and Reproaches. As for the Licence that is taken upon this Day, of inveighing against *Dissenters*, let them who do it, justify themselves; I am no Advocate for any of them: It was not, certainly, appointed to become a Day of *Wrath* and *Provocation* of our Fellow-Subjects; and, I dare say, those Liberties have done no Service; nor are they fitted to do any; but, considering hu-



man Nature, they must needs have done some Mischief, by Irritation, and the hardning of Mens Hearts. And though we do not see such Courses have been taken, by those who were most concerned and touched, as wise and good Men might have taken, to silence these Reproaches, and to cause these Provocations, in great part, to cease; yet still these furious, bitter Spirits will not be excusable. I verily believe, (and so do all of you) that more Men have been *shamed* by gentle Usage, than reviled into Repentance by those they thought their Enemies.

As for the *Praises* that are bestowed upon King *Charles*, I know not who should envy them; nor how a *Church of England Minister* can honestly decline them: He must know nothing of that Prince's History; He must have little Sense of Justice, Gratitude, or Honour, by whom his Memory is not held most precious. It were a small Thing to say, no *Prince* (although his *Father* was a very Learned one) but I will say, no *Private Gentleman*, did ever understand the Constitution of our Church better, defend it with stronger Arguments, adhere to it with more Judgment, adorn it with better Manners, live up to its good Principles with more Virtue; nor, in Performance of its Offices, shew more devout and exemplary good Behaviour (I will not, in these Things, except the *Queen* upon the *Throne*, nor that Blessed *Saint* in *Heaven*, her Sister) than did King *Charles the First*. No Prince did ever shew more personal Favour to its Ministers, nor give more Countenance and Credit to its Discipline and Orders. And must I say, no Prince, but *He*, did ever *die* in its Defence, to justify the high Esteem we have Him in? I may; because it is so true, that they who envy him the Glory of that Title, upon all Accounts besides, will yet allow he fell a *Martyr* for the *Church of England*. Would not that Church be most deservedly the Hatred and Reproach of all the World, that should be sparing of her Praises, and best Incense (but let it ever be unhallowed Incense) to his Memory? Let them (to make an end) take heed, lest some degree of *Guilt* be thought to make those People *over tender*, who are soon offended with the Praises of King *Charles the First*. And let even *Us our selves* take heed, that such our Praises may appear so well designed, and be managed with that good Temper, Sobriety, and modest Truth, that they provoke those Men to nothing but Compunction, and Relentings, and Repentance, where these Things are wanting; and both our selves and them, to the Imitation of all those excellent good Qualities, those Civil Virtues, and those Religious, Christian Graces, that made him appear so highly exemplary both in Life and Death.



T H E

Bishop of St. *Asaph's* C H A R G E

T O T H E

CLERGY of that Diocese, in 1710. And now  
made Publick by his LORDSHIP'S Permission.*The Tenour of the Oath to be administred to the Church-wardens and Side-men.*

**Y**OU shall Swear, That you will diligently Enquire, and true Presentment make, of all Defaults and Offences committed in your Parish, against the Ecclesiastical Laws of this Realm, to the best of your Skill and Knowledge.

*So help you God.*

## A R T I C L E S of E N Q U I R Y, &amp;c.

*To the CLERGY of the Diocese of St. ASAPH.*

**I**NTENDING, if it please God, to visit my Diocese this Summer ensuing, I have spent a little Time in considering how to make such *Visitation* easiest to my self and Clergy, and best to answer the Purposes and Ends of it. The Bishop's *Charge*, I have observed, has usually been a tiresome Thing to him himself, and taken up much more Time than could be well allowed on such Occasions. This Trouble I have spared both my self and you, by sending to you before-hand, what I should have most insisted on, had I tarried till the Time of delivering it by Word of Mouth. By this Method, I shall also avoid the frequent Repetition of the same Things, in several Places, which is truly tedious and uneasy: And shall not run the Hazard of saying many Things unseasonably, by saying them *every where*, which would be only pertinent and proper, in *this* or *that* particular *Deanry*. Thus, you see, I have consulted my own Ease; but not, I hope, without your Convenience also. I have saved my self the Trouble of connecting the particular Observations I have made, which in a general Discourse I must have done; but then I have also made it easy for you to apply what I have said, to the right Place; and given you more Time to consider and digest, with your *Church-Wardens*, the *Presentments* proper to be made. In a Word, the Method I have taken, I judged would be most convenient for our Common Service, without considering how it would be received, as singular, and unusual. And yet (that I may not be thought to have chalked out a Way peculiar to my self, and to affect unbeaten Paths) the antientest Form of an *Episcopal Visitation*, that, I believe, is extant, and which *Baluzius* hath printed at the End of his *Notes* upon *Regino*, Pag. 602. manifestly shews, that the Bishop did not always read his *Charge* (which is there called his *Admonitio*) himself, but delivered it to a *Deacon* to read it aloud, in the Bishop's Name and Stead, to the Clergy that were then and there assembled. It is above nine hundred Years old, and therefore it may be worth the while, to give you the *Title*, and the Beginning of it—the *Title* is,—*Admonitio Synodalis antiqua, à Diacono post Evangelium legenda; Episcopo, et ceteris in ordine sedentibus*. They had no *Sermon* then, but *Prayers*, *Psalms*, *Epistle*, and *Gospel*. And then followed the *Admonition*, of which this is the Beginning. *Fratres Presbyteri, et Sacerdotes Domini, Cooperatores Ordinis nostri estis. Nos quidem, quamvis indigni, locum Aaron tenemus. Vos autem locum Eleazari, et Ithamaris. Nos vice duodecim Apostolorum fungimur. Vos ad formam Septuaginta Discipulorum estis. Nos vero Pastores Vestri sumus. Vos autem Pastores animarum vobis Commissarum. Nos de Vobis Rationem reddituri sumus, Pastori Domino nostro Jesu Christo. Vos de Plebibus vobis commissis: et ideo, Carissimi, videte periculum vestrum. Ammonemus itaque, et obsecramus Fraternitatem vestram, ut quæ vobis suggerimus, memoriæ commendetis, et opere exercere studeatis*. And then follow the particular *Injunctions* he lays upon them, which are too long for this Place. I only transcribe thus much, to justify the Method I take: For I think it full as good for every Clergyman to read my *Charge* at home beforehand, as to hear a *Deacon* read it, or *Myself*, at our Meeting; especially since by these Means, he may read it again and again at his Leisure, as I hope, and ought to hope, he will. The *Articles of Enquiry* (which the Antients also called *Inquisitio*) are, generally, the same with those of my Honoured Predecessor, Dr. *Beveridge*, excepting that some new Occurrences have occasioned some few Additions, and some little Alterations. They will be, on that Score, as more familiar, so more acceptable to you; and I am truly glad to find the Memory of so excellent a Man, both for his Piety and Learning, so precious with you. May we all of us profit our selves of his good Example!



## TITLE I.

## Concerning the Clergy.

## 1. Doth your Minister reside upon his Benefice ?

1. The *Residence* of a Clergyman upon his *Benefice*, appears so reasonable and fit, that whensoever it is, for any considerable Time, interrupted, a good Man does not (I believe) so often recur to the *Dispensation* of his lawful Superiors, for the Satisfaction of his Mind therein, as to his own Conscience, to know whether that Dispensation be duly and rightly applied. He doubts not of the Reasonableness and Justice of such a Power, to make such Laws, and to distribute such Indulgencies, where needful, but he will make himself the Judge, whether he is himself a proper Subject of such Favour; and if he find not his Necessities of Absence and Non-Residence, to be just and true, and very pressing, his Heart reproaches him, even when he has his *Seals* and *Licence* in his Closet: He knows the Law is there ill used, the Judge mistaken, and himself faulty, and accountable to his great Lord and Master, though dispensed with here on Earth; and freed from Punishment. The very Nature of his Undertaking shews him this; the Obligations he has laid himself under, with such Solemnity, to God in his *Ordination*, and to his Bishop at his *Institution*, have strictly bound it on his Soul: And from this Burthen, nothing but good Reasons, and true Necessities can disengage him.

A Clergyman's *Parish* is, in some Sort, his House and Home; there is his Business, there his Family; there all his Time, his Care, his Pains and Diligence should be expended: And I call every Man's Heart to Witness, whether, the more Months he lives in his Parish, the more Duty he performs in it, the more Care he takes of it, he does not think himself the more approved of God and of all good Men, and of his own Conscience, and does not think he shall give a more joyful Account of his Charge in the Day of Judgment. I would therefore intreat all those with whom I am concerned, to consider seriously, what Profit, or what Pleasure, can ballance the Satisfaction of approving themselves to God, their own Consciences, and all good Men, by living among their People, as much as possibly they can, and doing them what Good lies in their Power, both by their Doctrine and Example. And I hope no Body, for the future, will either, without my Leave, absent themselves from their *Cures*, for any long Time; or obtain my Leave, by false Excuses, and such Pretences, as they know are groundless, though I cannot see through them; And I the rather say this, because, I doubt, there are some *Rectors* who think themselves at Liberty to absent themselves, because not tied, by Oath, to Continual Residence, as *Vicars* are. I assure them, this is but an imaginary Liberty; and the 21 H. VIII. cap. 13. may instruct them better.

## 2. Doth he dwell in his Parsonage or Vicarage-House ?

2. Residence doth ordinarily suppose the Minister to live in his proper House: But this *Enquiry* supposes it may be otherwise. I am sorry to hear that some of the Clergy of this Diocese have no House at all of their own to live in; and that others have such as cannot possibly receive their Families, and are therefore constrained to live in hired ones. I can think of applying no other Remedy to these Evils past, but warning those who are concerned, to take more Care for the future of their Houses; that they suffer them not, for want of a little Charge and Care at present, to grow daily worse and worse, till at last they come to such a Pass that they despair of mending them; and the next Successor finds them on the Ground, and is neither able to build them himself, nor to recover any Thing towards the doing it, from a poor helpless Widow, or insolvent Executor. By these Ways, a tolerable House becomes a mean one, and a mean one falls into Ruine. Wherever therefore the proper House is not sufficient to receive the Incumbent and his Family, I shall expect, and will exact with more than usual Strictness, that the House be kept in very good Repairs. But where it is possible, I hope to find every Incumbent in his proper House, and taking all due Care both to sustain it and amend it. This is what the Clergy owe in Justice to their Successors, because they either received it from their Predecessors, or thought themselves injured in not receiving it.

## 3. If he be not there himself, hath he a Curate allowed of by the Bishop, always residing among you ?

3. The Residence of a Minister on his Benefice is so necessary, that whenever his Business calls and keeps him from it, his Absence is to be supplied with a Curate, who is in all Respects to discharge the Office of the Incumbent, and is to be allowed of by the Bishop, *i. e.* he is not to be Curate, unless allowed of by the Bishop. There are some Reasons for which a Bishop may, with Safety, reject a Clerk presented to him by the Patron; but there are many other Reasons for which a Bishop would reject a Clerk, if he could do it without Trouble and Danger of the Law. But a Curate is so absolutely within the Bishop's Power, that none can be admitted as such, or entertained, without his Approbation or Allowance; not his Connivance or Permission only, but his Examination and his *Licence*. And therefore when the Laws allow of Pluralities and Non-Residence, for fear of what Miscarriages and Mischiefs might ensue from thence, they leave it in the Bishop's Power to prevent all Damage to the Church, and to supply all Defects of Absence, by putting in such Curates as they shall judge faithful and able to discharge the Office of Incumbents, and also have empowered them to appoint those Curates their *Rewards*.

## 4. Doth he read the whole Prayers of the Church distinctly and devoutly every Sunday, and every Time the People are assembled for that Purpose.

4. A Minister is not at Liberty to use, or to refuse, what Prayers he pleases, in the *Publick Service*, but must be governed by the *Rubrick*: Men may, and must, be left to their Discretion, in Things doubtful; but



but where there is a *Rule*, a modest Man will not be wise *above* it, and much less *against* it. But there are few, I hope, that want this Caution. I would to God there were as few concerned in the next Part of this Enquiry, which is, *Whether they read the Prayers distinctly and devoutly?* I have often wondered how it should come to pass, that so great a Part of the Ministerial Office, as *Reading Prayers* in Publick is, should take up so little of our Care and Study as it seems to do, and be so little considered by Us, which, were it well performed, would tend as much to our own, and to the Edification of our Audience, as any Thing we can do; which is, I dare say, the Desire and Aim of every good Clergyman. I own, that a good Voice, sweet Cadence, and a graceful Manner, in Reading, fall not to every Body's Share; nor are they to be acquired by Art and Study; they are rather Gifts of Nature, and improveable by Care and Observation; but many who have them, either totally neglect them, or misuse them strangely by an Excess of Affectation. But they who have them not, can yet read Prayers *distinctly and devoutly*; in this we ask nothing but what is in every one's Power to do, with a little Care and Attention; and I am sure it is their Duty. The Minister, in the Publick Service, is, as it were, the Mouth of the Congregation. His Voice is to reach the Ears, and to direct the Hearts of all his Audience, to their proper Object at that Time; and I will venture to affirm, that much of their Devotion will depend upon the Way and Manner of his uttering forth his Prayers and Praises. The *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *Chapters*, are clearly other Things, when read distinctly and devoutly, from what they are when read in Haste and inattentively. Much of their Efficacy will, I know, depend upon the Temper and good Disposition that Men bring along with them to Church on these Occasions; but still, I say, the People will not fail of being more or less affected with this Service, as it is more or less distinctly and devoutly uttered and performed by the Minister. And therefore all their Care will be well employed, in studying to do it in the best Manner that is possible. To read *too loud*, is to disturb the Devotion of the Audience, and draws them only to guessing what is the Matter, and what is the Occasion of exerting above what is needful: Men, in great Noises, cannot think at all, but are unfixed, and in much Confusion. To read *too low*, is to lose the End of Reading, which is to be heard and understood; it strains the Attention too much, and when Men have long listened to little Purpose, they presently give themselves up to think of other Matters. To read *too fast*, is to lose one's own Attention, and to outrun all other People's; the Mind has not Leisure to consider and dwell on what is said; the Ear does only take in Words and Sound, but nothing is communicated to the Heart; there is not Time for it, and then you may be sure there is no Devotion; for Devotion is, in this Case, the assenting of the Heart to what is heard by the Ears, and the being pleasingly moved with it. It is as if a Messenger should deliver his Errand whilst he is riding Post by you; you hear him say something, but what it is you know not, and so it is as if he had said nothing at all. This quick Dispatch of Prayers gives great Offence in many Kinds: It makes those who dislike our *Forms*, continue in their Prejudice against them: They fancy there is no Devotion in the *Speaker*, and they are sure the *Hearers* cannot edify by them, not being able to attend to them duly, and go along with them in the grave Manner that they should. It looks like Disrespect to the *Congregation*, as well as to the *Service* it self, to see Men hastning to an End of it in so unseemly a Manner, as if they longed to have it over, and had something better to do afterwards. The reading Prayers *too fast*, is the Fault that is most generally charged upon the Clergy; and therefore I insist upon it most, in order to its being mended; because it cannot, in Truth, be done either with *Distinction* or *Devotion*. But there is also something amiss in reading *too slow*, which is the other Extream, but which not many, in Comparison, fall into. The Attention, if it is not duly fed and entertained, is lost: When People know beforehand what you are to say, they are impatient till it is delivered; and if you stay beyond your Time, their Expectation becomes uneasy; they run before you in their Minds, but their Devotion is hereby disturbed and scattered. You may utter your *Sermons* with what Degree of Slowness and Deliberation you shall think fit, because, not knowing what you have to say, Men will expect with Patience. But in reading *Prayers*, with which they are well acquainted, you must, generally speaking, keep that decent middle Pace to which they are mostly accustomed, or else you will be in Danger of having your Audience either over-run you, or not overtake you, either of which quite spoils the End of publick Prayer. I would not multiply Rules and Observations of this Kind; most People will do best in following *Nature* in their Voice and Utterance, consulting *Reason* in Accents and in Cadence, and common *Custom* in the Quantities of *proper* Names, and Words that are of doubtful Pronunciation. But then a Clergyman will read the Prayers best, when he perceives he reads himself and his Audience into a serious and devout Attention to the good things delivered by him.

##### 5. Doth he preach every *Sunday*, either in the *English* or *British* Tongue?

5. Custom, I hear, has, in some Places of this Diocese, prevailed, to the Disuse of weekly Sermons, so that they have Preaching but once in a *Fortnight* or *three Weeks*. Such Custom, I am sure, must have proceeded from the Faultiness or Negligence of former Incumbents, and I hope the present ones will not indulge it any longer. I do utterly disclaim the encouraging any such ill Practice; nay I require it at the Hands of all that are concerned, to change it quickly, as they esteem my Favour or regard my Authority. I must leave it to the Minister's Discretion, whether this Sermon shall be in the *English* or the *British* Tongue; but a Sermon there must be in one of them, on every Lord's Day, in every Parish Church throughout the Diocese, unless there be great Cause to the contrary, *Can. 45*. I will not so far distrust the Reasonableness of this Injunction, as to add any Arguments in Favour of it; because I can foresee nothing material to be objected to it; but let me take this Opportunity of advising the Ministers so to divide their *English* and their *British* Sermons, as may most tend to the general Edification of their People. In some Places I understand there is now and then an *English* Sermon preached, for the Sake of one or two of the best Families in the Parish, although the rest of the Parish understand little or nothing of *English*, and those few Families understand the *British* perfectly well, as being their native Tongue: I cannot possibly approve of this Respect and Complaisance to a few, that makes the Minister so useless to the rest, and much the greatest Number of his People. I should be very glad (for my own Sake) that there were but one Language common to us all, and that one were *English*; but till that wish can be accomplished, I heartily desire the Language of the Minister may be always such as will best instruct, and edify his People most; and that no *Civility* should come in Competition with his *Duty*, much less take Place of it. I know that the Religion and Good-breeding of the Gentry, will



easily part with a respectful Custom, when it is prejudicial to their poor Neighbours. What is it for a Minister to be a *Barbarian*, and to speak in an *unknown Tongue*, but to preach in a Language that is not understood by those who hear him? And if I were to give you Rules of Preaching, whatever the Language were, *English* or *British*, the first should be, to speak to the *greatest Part* of your Congregation, *i. e.* to those who make up the *Body* of your People. Consider their Necessities and Manners, and suit the *Matter* of your Sermons to them; consider their Capacities and Understandings, and suit your *Language* and *Expression* to them; and I dare warrant you will best discharge the Office of a Preacher. I do not mean that you should use the *Market Phrase*, and fall into the Expression of the lowest of the Vulgar; but such a Plainness of Speech as is suited to the Capacity of all Men in general, which yet is clean and pure, and such as the most elegant and well-bred People may and do use: All Manner of Words and Expressions that have any thing base and vile in them, that excite any sordid or impure Images in the Mind, or that are by Use become ambiguous, and of *double Meaning*, are to be carefully avoided in our Compositions for the Pulpit; that Place is sacred to Severity, and will admit no sort of Levities in Language. Let but your Words be plain and proper, and they will be received, and understood, and approved by all the Congregation, though made up of great Variety of People. A Preacher cannot answer it to his *Audience*, if what he says be proper only to a *few*, or intelligible to here and there a Man. Would that be thought a civil Entertainment, where more than half the Guests must rise from the Table, and go away with Nothing? The Case is not unlike, where many Controversial Points are handled, new Notions started, and new Books confuted, and Authors called upon, in Places where the People (Nine of Ten) have never so much as heard of such an Error, such a Person, such a Book, or Name, or Thing: They profit nothing by such Means; Discourses of this Kind are wholly lost upon them; and so indeed are many others made on odd and antiquated Subjects, Things that are true perhaps, but so much out of the common Way, that they signify but little, and edify less, though handled very learnedly, and very well understood. In a Word, I ask no more under this Head, than that every Preacher would, whilst he is designing and composing his Sermon, consider the Nature and Condition of his *Audience*, their spiritual Wants, and the Reach of their Understanding, and treat them in such a Manner as shall most probably affect the *greatest Part* of them. He should (and would if he could) instruct and affect them *all*; but the Diversity of Age and Capacity making that impossible, his next best Aim must be to instruct and affect the *most*, which is certainly best done by plain Sense in plain Expression.

#### 6. Is he and his Curate of an unblemished Life?

6. I have been making some Observations upon reading Prayers, and Preaching in such Manner as may tend most to the Edification of the People; but neither will be done as it ought to be, unless the Answer to this Enquiry be in the *Affirmative*. If a *sober and unblemished Life* do not adorn the Minister, he will not be able either to pray or preach to any great Purpose: The People will not fail, in the Midst of his best Performances, to remember his Disorders and Irregularities; they will be evermore applying to him what the *Psalmist* says,——in the Name of God——*Why dost thou preach my Laws, and takest my Covenant in thy Mouth? whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hath cast my Words behind thee?* It is a dreadful Objection People make to all that we can say in Behalf of Virtue and Religion, if we live loosely and disorderly——Why does this Man confute his Doctrine by his Practice? Why does he heap up Arguments to stir us to Sobriety and Temperance, that have no Power upon himself? I own these Reasonings are not good; nor does it follow that the Minister believes not what he says is true, because he lives in Contradiction to it. The Rule is the same to both the Minister and People, and each shall answer for themselves for the Breach of it: But the Minister is obliged to shew the People that the Rule is practicable. He is to go before them, by Example, in the Ways of Righteousness, and shew the People those Ways are passable, and safe, and easier than they apprehend them to be. He is not only to preach up Temperance, and Sobriety, and Chastity, and Justice, and Mercy, and every thing that is Praise-worthy——but also to let them see, that the Arguments and Motives by which he persuades his People to the Exercise of all these Graces and Virtues, are such as thoroughly convince and persuade himself, so that they see his Practice correspond to his Instructions.

I know not (as I said) of one Precept in all the Scriptures, commanding any thing good, or prohibiting any thing evil, that does not as much oblige *every Man and Woman* living, as it does the *Priest* or *Minister* of the *Parish*; but yet I see his Condemnation for Offences of the same kind, must needs be greater than theirs. Whence can this be, but from the Nature of his Office and holy Calling, which is to teach all Truth, and to live in the Exercise of it? From the Solemnity of his own Engagements, when he was separated from the World to God's Service, by which he willingly bound himself, to go before his People both in *Doctrine* and *Example*? From the Expectation of all the World, which is, has been, and will for ever be, that the Priest should live a Life according to his Rules, and in most exemplary Manner? And from the mighty Scandal that he gives, when he walks contrary to these Engagements, Obligations, and Expectations? No Body's Crimes exciting more Abhorrence, Rage, and Detestation in the Hearts of all Men, than theirs who are devoted to the Service of the Altar; nor do any one's Offences equally wound Religion with theirs; not when Men reason well and judge impartially, but when Men of corrupt Minds and wicked Practice reason and judge, as they have always done, and will, I doubt not, always do. They conclude against the Truths of Revelation, from the little Effect they see they have upon the Practice of the *Priests*, its domestick Servants, Votaries, and Defenders. Vain Men, it is not so! You want more solid Arguments against the Truths that trouble you, than any you can find: You want Objections to the Precepts of the Gospel, that enjoin you Holiness of Life, and Virtues of all Kinds; and you expect to find them sooner, and more plentifully, from the Practice of weak imperfect Men, and subject to the same Passions, Inclinations, and Affections with yourselves, than any your Wit and Invention can furnish you with, or any you can fetch from the Defect of Reason in those Rules and Precepts, or of Authority in those who gave them and enjoined them. But how can you be strengthened in Infidelity, or settled in wicked Practice, from the corrupt and depraved Manners of the Priests, when the Question is about the Truth and Reasonableness of the Rules and Precepts you are to walk by, and their *Authority*, and not about the Effect and Influence they have? when even those Priests, as well as you, are obliged to *walk* by Rule, and will be *judged* by Rule, and certainly condemned for their transgressing it? Let us desire these Gentlemen not to defer so much to our Example, unless they will conclude



clude as well in *Favour* of Truth and Virtue, from the Practice of such among us as walk honestly and carefully, as they do *against* them, from the Practice of those who walk contrary to both.

But with how much Reason and Strength soever I think I could argue against those Men, who slight and discredit Virtue and Religion for the Wickedness-sake of some bad Ministers——yet does my Heart fail me, when I consider how it is *in Fact*, and to what Degree those good Things suffer in the World, from any of our notorious Failings: Then have I little Joy in thinking that Men make false Conclusions in these Cases, when I remember they *have* made, and *will*, to the End of the World, make just the *same* Conclusions. Then have I little Regard to all that can be offered to these Gainfayers of the Truth; and rather turn my self to you, my *Brethren* and my *Friends*, with the most serious Exhortation of St. Paul to Titus ii. 7, 8. *That you would in all things shew your selves Patterns of good Works, that he that is of the contrary Part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you; and giving no Offence in any thing, that the Ministry may not be blamed,* 2 Cor. vi. 3. You see how early Men began to take Exceptions to the Sacred Office, for the sake of some who behaved themselves ill in that Character.

7. Doth he diligently upon *Sundays*, openly in the Church, Instruct and Examine so many Children of his Parish, sent unto him, as he thinks convenient, in some Part of the Church-Catechism?

7. The Excellence and Usefulness of *Catechising* young People, and instructing them in the Principles of their Religion, is so manifestly great, that I know not what to say in its Defence: Things that are plain, do neither want, nor bear any Illustration. Religion is, in this, like all other Arts and Sciences; it must be learned whilst People are young, and susceptible of good Impressions, or very little Proficiency will be made therein; and I see most Clergymen are of this Opinion, by the innumerable Multitude of Catechisms that have been, and are daily put out by them, for the Use of young Beginners in the Knowledge of Religion; not that they differ in their Principles, or Exposition of great Truths, each from the other; but that each of them has Regard to some particular Sett of People, to which they have, or have had Relation, to whose Necessities, and Capacities, they suit their Instructions: This is the true Cause of their Variety: for they all of them comment on the same Text, namely, the *Church Catechism*, which is, in truth, such a *Summary* of the Christian Faith and Duty, delivered with such Brevity, and yet such Perspicuity, that, as far as I can judge, no Church of any Age or Place hath ever produced its Equal; and you shall in vain seek for the like, in the Works of any one, either *Greek* or *Latin*, Writer. And as this Variety of Catechisms demonstrates the Concurrence of the Common Judgment in the Use and Necessity of Catechising; so it has made it very easy for others to do the same good Work after them; and therefore I hope you will every one of you attend to it, and breed up a Generation that will shame the present one, both in its Knowledge and sincere Practice of Christian Duties. And that which should the rather invite you to discharge this Part of your Duty to your Parishes, is this, That the Elder People, who have either never learned, or quite forgotten the Principles of their Religion, will be hereby instructed, or reminded of them: I never yet heard Catechising in the Church, where I did not see the Oldest and the Gravest People attend as seriously as any else; and I dare say they were as much edified, and more pleased to be so, than the Younger. I was once in a Church (which I have ever since remembred with some Pleasure) where I heard Men and Women, some fifty, some sixty, and others upwards of those Years, repeating their Catechism before the Congregation, as Children commonly do, in other Places. A good Christian had, it seems, left so many *Loaves*, to be disposed of to such poor People (of what Age soever) as should publicly submit to be instructed in the Church-Catechism, and publicly rehearse the several Parts of it; which they did very readily, without any Shame or Shines. Who knows but these poor People would, without this Motive and Encouragement, have lived and died in utter Ignorance of the Faith and Duty of a Christian? And was ever any Bread distributed with more Charity, that fed the Soul (as it were) as well as the Body? But though Old People will not (without the *Loaves*) be brought to rehearse their Catechism among you, yet I dare say the Oldest will not be ashamed to learn it, and remember it, from what they hear the Young-ones say, and what is said to them.

8. Doth he administer the Sacrament of Baptism publicly at the Font in the Church, and not elsewhere, except in case of Necessity, when there is Cause to fear the Child may otherwise die without it?

9. Doth he, in that Case, use only the Office for Private Baptism; and afterwards, if the Child recover, receive it publicly into the Church, as the Law requires?

8, 9. These two Articles are Points of *Discipline*; and in all such Cases, the *Rubrick* is the Guide. The *Font* was usually placed at the Entry of the Church, to signify that no body could be a Member of Christ's Church, but he who was initiated into it by *Water-Baptism*, and the bringing Children to publick Baptism in Churches, was, among other Reasons, required, to the Intent, that every one of the Congregation, hearing the Stipulations and Engagements made for the present Infant, might be put in mind of their own, and accordingly endeavour to reform their own Defects, and faulty Negligences. The Injunctions of the Antient Christians of this Kind, had more and other Reasons to proceed upon, than the late or modern ones had, or can have. But the *Church of England* had, and hath Authority enough, and Reasons enow, to enjoin what she enjoyns of this Nature; and I must also add, that she hath Goodness enough to connive at the Relaxation of such Rules of Discipline, as cannot strictly be observed without great Danger, or extream Inconvenience, upon some Occasions, and in some Places; not to *schismatical*, or *careless*, or *presumptuous* Heads, regardless of all Rule and Order; but to such modest, prudent, and considerate Men, as finding themselves in great Straits, do rather venture an Irregularity of their own, than an apparent Mischief to the Church.

10. Doth



10. Doth he administer the Sacrament of the *Lord's-Supper* so often, that all his Parishioners may receive at least three times in the Year?
11. Is he always ready to Administer it, when there is a sufficient Number of his Parishioners duly prepared and desirous to Communicate with him?
12. Doth he on the *Sunday* or Holy-day before the Communion, give Notice thereof in the Church, and read one of the Exhortations fitted to that Purpose in the Common-Prayer-Book?

10, 11, 12. Both Laws and Custom have so secured this Point, that I do not expect to hear of one Parish in the Diocese, where the People have not the Opportunity of communicating, three times at least in every Year; but oftner, if they signify any Disposition to do so, and have sufficient Numbers to join with them. I doubt not but the Ministers will be so far from neglecting the Opportunities required by Authority, that they will seriously and earnestly invite their People to communicate more frequently than they are commanded to do: And will dispose them to it by such Discourses as will shew them, that the Duty they are called to, is none of those they think the *Burthens of Religion*, but rather a great Privilege, an Honour, and Advantage; a Feast of Love, and Joy, and Thanksgiving for the Deliverance of our Souls from Death, for the Forgiveness of our Sins, and for the Satisfaction made to God by the most meritorious Sacrifice of *Christ* upon the Cross, which we then and there commemorate. They will endeavour to abate the Horror, and most dreadful Apprehensions which some of *St. Paul's* Expressions (used also by our Church in its *Exhortations*) ill applied and understood, are apt to excite in many People's Minds: By shewing them what *St. Paul* meant by them, in the particular Case of the *Corinthians*; and what the Church now means in the general Application of them to all her Children; which surely cannot be the same, where there is not the like Occasion given, the same Abuses not to be committed, nor any Circumstance appear common with theirs, which first occasioned that Discourse, and which can best instruct us in its Sense and Meaning. They will insist upon a *penitent Heart*, a *lively Faith*, and a *forgiving Temper*; and that will scatter all their Fears, and fill them with good Hope when they approach to the Lord's Table, and bring them home again with Peace and Satisfaction. See if the whole Communion-Service tends not to this Purpose; if it supposes any other Preparation to the coming to the Sacrament, to the Eating and Drinking Worthily, and to the avoiding that Damnation that it threatens to the Unworthy Receiver; whatever it means by these Expressions.

13. Is he careful to Visit the Sick, and to prepare them for the Holy Communion, and for their Departure into the other World?

13. This is so tender a Part of the Office of a *Parish-Priest*, that even good Nature and Compassion are as ready to excite him to the due Discharge of it, as the Sense of Duty, and the Injunctions of Authority can be: But when they join, no Considerations can be wanting to enforce the carefullest Attention to this good Part of *Visiting the Sick*. Surely Men are never more in Earnest, never more truly sensible of their everlasting Concern, that when they lie upon the Bed of Sickness, and believe they are going to give an Account to God of all their past Life. Then therefore is the Time when they will gladliest hear your Prayers, attentively consider your Advice, bear your Reproofs, and hearken to your Admonitions, Exhortations and Instructions; then are they readiest to confess their Sins, promise Amendment, and Submission to the Laws of *Christ*. Then therefore is the Season of applying to them, with most Success, in such Discourses as you find most proper to their State and Condition; whether it be to bring them to a Sense and Acknowledgment of their past Offences, to work in them such Shame and Sorrow as befits them; such Purposes of Satisfaction and Amends, (where it can possibly be done) as will testify they have brought forth Fruits meet for *Repentance*, and such firm Resolutions of Amendment for the future, that they and you may have great Comfort in them, whether they live or die: Or whether it be to strengthen them in their Faith, clear up their Doubts, and encourage them against all causeless Fear, distrust of their Condition, and Despondency.

I would not have the Clergy to be Busy-Bodies, nor Medlers with other Peoples Matters, especially their Temporal and Domestick Concerns, because it gives Men great Distaste, and does Disservice to them in the main: But yet, unless they be most diligent and heedful Observers of the Lives and Manners of their People, they will neither preach pertinently to them in their Churches, nor discourse properly in their Houses, nor rightly apply to them on their Sick Beds. To do these Patients the best Service, one must thoroughly know, and be well acquainted, with their Condition. If Shame, or Pride, or Vanity, or other Reason should cause them to conceal their State, and talk in Generals only (as the Case too often happens) yet your Acquaintance with their Practice will help you to speak plainly to them, and your Duty will oblige you to be particular, in all Points that are necessary. Whereas if the Sick be silent, or conceal himself, and the Minister be ignorant how Things have passed, the Visit will be meer Formality and useless to them both. I would not therefore have the Practice of sending for a strange, or neighbour Minister, on these Occasions, encouraged beyond what is necessary. The *Parish-Priest* is much the fittest Person to be used in this Service, because he is presumed to know the Parties best, and consequently can best fit his Exhortations to the present Necessities. In Cases, indeed, where the Sick have something secret to impart, and would unburthen their Conscience, and receive either Satisfaction of some Doubts, or Absolution; I cannot but believe they are at Liberty to send for whom they please, and the Clergy at Liberty to go, and serve them to their utmost. But in all other Cases, which are ordinary, where neither Secrecy, nor greater Skill, are required, I should be glad the People would always send for their own Ministers, and that the Clergy should make some Scruple of invading their Brother's Office, on these Occasions, when they know he is in the Way, and within Reach, and ready to do his Duty. They will, I hope, be ever tender of each other's Credit, and



and will contribute nothing (which they can avoid) to the bringing any Disrespect on any one; nor should the People be encouraged in the Opinion, that *One Man's* Service is so preferable to *Another's*, in Matters of this Nature, where all depends upon the Grace of God, and the good Disposition of the Recipients, or the Parties administred to; and nothing at all upon the Goodness of the Minister, though he were holy as *John the Baptist*. But can I slip this Opportunity of saying, that, though I know this is an Error of the People, and with the Prejudice were wholly rooted up out of their Minds, yet I believe it never was, nor ever will be otherwise? The Clergy who live best, will not only evermore be best esteemed of by all Men; (that is their Due, and always will be paid) but Men will always think their Ministerial Service to be much more efficacious, than that of Others, and will be always more desirous of it; and in the Times of Sickness more than any other. I know not how to rectify this Error, but I know how it may be turned to Good, and made subservient to the best of Purposes, and that will be by living holily; for then the People will desire our Prayers, and covet earnestly our Spiritual Service, and believe us more effectually when we apply to them; and though *they* should be mistaken, yet *we* shall be the better, and reap the Fruits and Rewards of being so. But where will those unhappy Ministers appear, who, by their wicked and licentious Lives, have given such Scandal and Offence to their Congregations, that they abhor the Sacrifice of the Lord; and know not how to send for them, or ask their Prayers; *who have themselves lived, as it were, without God in the World?* What a Discouragement must it needs be, to poor People, from calling for the Minister to dispose them for Death, when they have known him live, as if there were no After-reckoning to be made? But with what Face, what Heart, can he prepare them for the Sacrament, by exhorting them to a lively Faith, and most sincere Repentance, who seems, to them, to have no Sense of either? The People are, in truth, too slack in calling for the Assistance of their Pastors, upon these Occasions, even when they are Sober, Virtuous, Godly Men, and every way qualified to do them Service; But who can bear the Burthen of that Guilt, that makes it seem so reasonable for People not to send for, or admit that Service? Some few there are, I doubt, of this bad Class; God, of his Goodness, shorten, every Day, their Number, by giving them the Grace of true Repentance, that they may save themselves and those that hear them. But where the People are slack and negligent, there I advise the Minister to find his Opportunity, and visit without being sent for, for fear he should not be sent for at *all*, or sent for, as the Manner often is, when it is too late. The Friends and Relations of the Sick are indeed obliged to give the Minister Notice, when it is most convenient he should come; when are the Intervals of greater Ease, from Pain or Sicknes; when they are most awake and sensible; and when the Operations of Medicines best permit; want of this Information may make a Visit troublesome, if not entirely useless; besides the Loss of Time and Pains, which in some Cases, is not inconsiderable. I do not therefore judge a Minister to be always in fault, when some of his Parishioners have died without his visiting them; it may be he has had no Notice of their Illness, or was not called by those who should have done that good Office for their Friend or Relation. He must be always ready and disposed to go; and he must do it *freely*, without *asking*, and without *expecting* any manner of Reward; for fear that Consideration should hinder poor People from requiring his Prayers and Assistance in their last Extremities, which they want, and would be glad to have, but cannot bear the Charge of. This is an Age of such Corruption, that though I hope, nothing like it has reached so far as *Wales*, yet I cannot choose but give Warning of it, to all with whom I have any thing to do. As to the Business of *Abolution*, in this Office, as it is a Matter of great Moment, so is it also thought of some Difficulty to know when it is to be applied. The Conditions of it, are the truly repenting, and unfeignedly believing the Gospel. The Difficulty of applying it, arises from the Difficulty of knowing when Men truly repent, and when they unfeignedly believe. And I must needs say, that it is not in any Man's Power to know, with any Certainty, when this is truly done: We must take Men's Words for it, and depend upon the Professions they make; and though we may pass a wrong Judgment, and pronounce a Sentence that will not stand, before the great Judge; yet we shall do it without Hazard to our selves, provided the sick Penitent make, at that Time, a special Confession of his Sins, and humbly and heartily desire the Priest or Minister to give him *Abolution*. These are the Directions the Church gives in the *Rubrics* of this Office, which if carefully read and well observed, I know not what great Difficulty the Priest will find about pronouncing the *Abolution*. I will end this Article with remarking, That the Performance of this Office, with such a serious, grave, and compassionate Concern, as the sick Person's Case requires, does usually draw with it a greater Degree of Esteem and Love, from those who behold and hear it, than the Performance of other Offices is wont to do: And I have known it engage Men in a very serviceable Friendship to their Minister, for ever after. Under this Head, I think it proper to say, that the Minister remind such People as have in their Sicknes desired the Prayers of the Congregation, to return their Thanks as publickly to God, for his restoring them to their Health.

14. Doth he ever celebrate Matrimony without Banns being first Published Three several *Sundays*, or Holydays, in the Parish Church where the Parties dwell; unless he have a special Licence to do it?

14. To prevent Incestuous, Shameful, and Unequal Matches, the Church has all along been careful to ordain that none should be clandestinely married, without *Banns* being first *published*, or without special *Licence* obtained, and between the Hours of eight and twelve in the Morning. To this Purpose it has been made highly penal by the *Canons*, for any Clergyman to marry otherwise than was allowed and publickly approved. The 62d *Canon* made in 1603, ordains Suspension *ipso facto* for three Years, to any one offending in this kind. We must indeed own, that all the Evils and Mischiefs of Clandestine Marriages, how great and many soever they be, are justly chargeable upon the Clergy, since, without their Concurrence, there could be no such things; and therefore no Severities can be too great, to be inflicted on those wicked Men, who for the sake of a little Profit more than ordinary, bring so much Shame, and Sorrow, and Substantial Misery, upon whole Families; undo young thoughtless Creatures; dissolve the Ties of Childrens Duty and Obedience to their Parents, and of Parents Care and Affection to their Children; nothing being more apt to alienate their Hearts, and provoke them to many rash and hard Resolutions, than the strange and unaccountable Choices their Children often make: which yet they could not compass, without the Assistance of some



mercenary Wretch abusing his good Office. Ought not a Clergyman, above all others, to consider, the Strength of Parents Love to their Children; their constant Care and Thoughtfulness to do them Good; their Charges in their Education; the Toils they are at, the Pains and Labours they undergo continually, to make Provision for them; the Designs they have laid to make them happy; the Hopes they have treasured up in them, and the Pleasure they have already conceived in having them well bestowed? These Things are all so natural, that they come within the compass of every Bodies Thought; and how can any Clergyman forbear to put himself in such a Parent's Case, and see how he could endure the Disappointment of all such Love, such Hope, such Expectations, and Desire; and, in their Stead, to find himself covered with Confusion and Disgrace, by the most disagreeable, unequal, if not shameful Match, of his extravagant and disobedient Child? And all this, by Means of a Man who must transgress all the Rules of Reason, and Commands of God and his Superiors, to bring it to pass. I know not how a Man can make himself more justly hated, than a Clergyman does, by these clandestine and forbidden Marriages; nor draw more Execrations, if not Vengeance, on his Head, from Families so provoked and injured. I doubt the Laws themselves, though executed carefully by all the Clergy, would not be able to prevent all manner of Miscarriages of this Nature: The Business of *Licenses* is subject to much Abuse: But this is what the Clergy cannot help, and therefore are not to answer for; what they can help, I hope they will.

Thus I have gone through all the several Articles contained under the *First Title*, which relate to the Clergy in particular; and though the *Enquiry* is made to, and the Answer expected from, the *Church-wardens*; yet I conceived it best, to direct the Consideration of all these things to you, *My Brethren*, who are indeed the most concerned in them, and whose Practice is to furnish the *Church-wardens* with proper Answers to the several Questions. I hope you will, all of you, seriously read, and think upon them; and if any thing is, or hath been amiss, that you will set it right again, that I may come and meet you (as both my Wish and Inclination is) in Love and with the Spirit of Meekness.

## T I T L E II.

### Concerning the Parishioners.

**I**T will not be amiss, I believe, that the Church-wardens should remember, and be told, 1. That they are Officers of the Parish, in Ecclesiastical Affairs. 2. That when they enter on their Office, they take an Oath to discharge that Office, *well and truly*. 3. That by Virtue of this Oath, they are obliged, at *Visitations*, to make *Presentments* of such things as are amiss in their Parishes, according to the *Articles* delivered to them. 4. That if they knowingly neglect, or refuse to make such *Presentments*, the *Ordinary* has Power to proceed against them, as *wilful Breakers of their Oath*. These things it is fit they should understand; and, I doubt, the Education, Way of Living, and Capacity of most of them, will make it needful for the Minister to instruct them in their Duty, and remind them of the Obligations, and help them to make their *Presentments*, in such manner as shall best answer to the End and Purpose of their appearing at *Visitations*, which is, in truth, to be aiding and assisting to the *Ordinary*, in the Exercise of what Church-Discipline is left within his Power. And I hope the short Remarks I shall make upon each Head as I go along, will convince Men of the Reasonableness of making *Presentments* of Offenders in these Particulars.

#### 1. Are there any in your Parish, who commonly absent themselves from Morning or Evening Prayer, upon the Lord's Day?

1. As it was God alone who sanctified this Day, and separated it to a holy Rest, in Commemoration of his Benefits and Mercies; So it is he alone who can excuse a Man, absenting himself entirely on this Day, from performing his Devotion in publick with the Congregation, *i. e.* a Man must needs be disabled from coming to Church by Age, or Pain, or Sickness, or Indisposition, or extremely bad Ways and Weather (all which are Excuses of God's own making) who ordinarily and commonly absents himself, Morning and Evening, from the Church or Congregation, where he pretends to worship God. I have ever thought it a great Disservice to Religion, to carry the *Common Duties* of it, beyond the *Common Powers* of those who are to practice them; or stretch Commands to an unreasonable Extent. And upon this Score, have wondered much, and not without much Dissatisfaction, to see so many worthy People in the Days of our Fathers, press the Observation of the *Sabbath* (as they called it, by which the *Christian Church* for fifteen hundred Years did ever mean *Saturday*) in so rigorous and precise a manner, as would have been a Burthen even to *Jews*. But I would not, for all that, have their Mistakes so rectified, as to run us into the contrary Extrem, of a loose and negligent Observance of that Day. *That Day* still is, and ever must be, *holy to the Lord*: And when it ceases to be so, there will be an End of our Religion. Observe the People that neglect the serving God upon that Day, and I believe, you will find them good for nothing; they serve him very carelessly at all times else; nay, we may well suspect they serve him not at all; for wherever *Christianity* has got any Footing, it has been allowed, that the *Lord's Day* should be the Day of Publick Worship for all Sorts of People, and they who have neglected it, have generally been reckoned Men of no Religion: Or if they are not so by Principles, they will soon become so, by this Practice of absenting ordinarily from Church on the *Lord's Day*. It is the frequent Return of this Day, and what is said and done thereon, that keeps Religion alive in People's Hearts. They would forget the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Creed*, and the *Ten Commandments*, if they came not to Church, to hear and repeat them there on *Sundays*. It is on these Occasions, that even good and serious Christians are glad to be put in Mind of many useful Truths, and important Duties, which they had, in a manner, forgotten or neglected: All People do not come to Church to learn what they never heard or knew before, but to be exhorted to put in Practice what they knew, and to be reminded of what they understood, but had not well enough attended to. And I question not, but most of us owe what Share of Virtue, and Religion we have, to the Improvements we make, by the Grace of God, of these Weekly Opportunities of meeting together and serving him in Publick. Let the *Church-wardens* therefore look about,



and see who they are, that *commonly* (not feldom, or now and then, for most People have Occasion so to do, and must not be called upon for that) absent themselves from Morning and Evening Service on the *Lord's Day*: And *present* them at the *Visitation*, that Care may be taken, to admonish and instruct them better, or, if there be good Reason, to punish them and make them *Examples*. As to *Dissenters* who are known to resort to their own *Assemblies*, and to have qualified themselves as the *Toleration-Act* requires (*i. e.* who have taken the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and subscribed the *Declaration* mentioned in a *Statute* made 30 *Car. II.*) such *Dissenters*, I say, are not to be *presented*. But if you know of any such, as under Pretence of being *Dissenters*, abstain from going either to *Church*, or to *separate Assemblies*, you may well *present* them, and put it upon them to prove that they have qualified themselves, as is required. And this, without Offence even to *Dissenters*, if they are good and serious People: For the Law was not made to encourage *Irreligion*, but for the *Ease of Tender Consciences*; not to tolerate Men that would not worship God at all, but such as could not be brought (Unhappy People they!) to worship Him, in the Way of the *Church of England*. I cannot choose but thank God, that I have not many *Dissenters* within my *Diocese*; And yet I should be glad to hear their Numbers were encreased, by the Addition of all such, as constantly pass away the *Lord's Day*, either in doing nothing, or in doing their private and domestick Affairs, or in walking about their *Grounds*, or in what they call *Good-fellowship*; that is, I had rather they were of *some*, than of *no* Religion; and would worship God in any Congregation, by *Law* permitted, if they will not do it, in our good Way, by *Law* established.

2. Are there any who follow their Callings, or other worldly Employment, upon the Lord's-Day?

2. If the Covetousness of Gain, and the Hard-heartedness of many Men, were not strangely great, such an Enquiry as this, could not, in a Christian Country, be, in any Degree, necessary. The Mercy of the *Fourth Commandment* was to extend, we know, to all the Family, even to the Servants, and the Cattle without Doors, for fear they should be over-wrought. And because the Servants were, heretofore, much in their Master's Power, it was ordained (in the Days of our *Saxon Ancestors*) that if a Master commanded his Slave to work on *Sunday*, the Slave was to be at *Liberty*, and the Master punished by *Fine*: And if he wrought upon that Day, without Command, he was to be publicly scourged. And that there might be no Pretence of Necessity for doing any other worldly Business on this Day, but what was charitable, or needful for the Life and Ease of Man, not even for killing and providing Victuals for the Family, it was ordained, that *Saturday* should generally be the *Market-Day* for all Christians; and it has, accordingly, been so, in most Countries, for upwards of nine hundred Years, as appears from our Books: Though other Days are also *Market-Days* in many Places, for some particular Reasons. Now if the Laws, both of God, and of the Land, prohibit Men the following their Callings, and other worldly Employments on the *Lord's-Day*, not only for the Servants and the Cattle's sake, that they might rest from their Labours; but also to distinguish it from other Days, and to give all People Opportunities and Leisure of serving God, and looking after the Concerns of Religion, and securing their eternal Interest, by offering up their Prayers and Praises, by hearing, and attending to, God's Word, and taking their Lives into Examination: If these, and the like, are proper Exercises for the *Lord's-Day*—it is to be hoped, that the People will be brought to think, that not their worldly Labours, and the following their proper Callings only, will be Hindrances and Impediments to these good *Sunday-Works*; but all such rude and boisterous Playings, Games, and Exercises, as quite transport the Mind from serious sober Considerations; consume abundance of their Time; tempt them to swear and curse; and either end in Quarrels, or in drunken Associations, and loose Appointments. These, and the like ungodly Works of Riot and Excess, are of much worse Consequence, and more profane the *Lord's-Day*, by a great deal, than the following lawful Callings and Employments would; and, certainly, the Ways that naturally lead to them, should be most carefully avoided. *The Book of Sports* it self (which was but a *Declaration* put out by *James I.* and afterwards unhappily revived in the Days of *King Charles* his Son) as odious, and licentious as it was esteemed, did yet prescribe such Rules, as I should be glad were now observed, in some Places, in Honour of the *Lord's-Day*. No Liberties were allowed (by that *Proclamation*, or *Declaration*) but with these Conditions and Restrictions: 1. That the Men and Women should have been at *Divine Service*. 2. At their own *Parish-Churches*. 3. To have no Liberty till after *Evening-Service* was ended. 4. The People that belonged to *One Parish* were not to join in Recreation with the People of *Another Parish*, but each to keep to their own Company.

I confess, I cannot see, but, if innocent, modest, and moderate Recreations, are to be allowed upon the *Lord's-Day*, that any better Limitations, and Conditions can be set to Peoples Liberties, than these. And therefore till the People can be brought to consider Things better, and betake themselves to wiser Counsels, let Care be taken that these idle Hours be passed with as little Offence as can be, to Virtue and Religion: And that if any thing be done, at such Times, as the *Laws* and *Canons* will take hold of; let the Offenders be certainly taken notice of, and pursued to Extremity. The Laws forbid all *Swearing*, *Cursing*, *Drunkenness*, and *Revelling*; it will be hard for those who meet (to take their *Pastimes*) on these Occasions, to avoid the falling into some of these Offences. Let not a Man of them be spared; make the severest Examples of them, that the Laws will allow; make it a *shameful*, or a *painful*, or a *chargeable* thing, to swear an *Oath*, to utter a *Curse*, or to be *Drunk*, or to use any *wanton Dalliance*, on these Occasions, and you will quickly see an End to these *Assemblings*: It will be so *uneasy* a thing, to be upon the *Guard*, so long, in a suspected Company, that they will either refuse to meet at all, or will soon break the *Meeting* up; and, either Way, be inoffensive. I think the Laws that punish these Offences, may, by this means, be made as useful, as if they did directly threaten and forbid such *Meetings*, which are the Occasions of them, and Incitements to them. And those will be to be blamed, who shall not contribute to put them in Execution, when there is good Reason.

There is another innocent and artful Way of cutting short at least, if not preventing, these *unseasonable Recreations*. And that is, of not going so soon to *Evening-Prayer*, as ordinarily is done, and lengthening out the Time, when there, by *Catechizing* the young People. A prudent Man may, by these means, steal an Hour



*Hour* from these disorderly Folks, and give it them again, in something better for them. But how much happier would it be, both for the *Minister* and for themselves, if these young People would be brought to consider seriously, that these their idle Hours (as they account them) are, generally speaking, the only Hours they have, of all their Life, to spend in good Reflections and Religious Meditations; to bethink themselves of what is past, and to resolve upon Amendment for the future. The Excuse they make, is, that they have no other time for Recreations, but the *Sunday-Evenings*. I doubt it is not true; I have not heard, the People of our Countries are so famed for Diligence, and painful Labours, all the Week long. But, if we take them at their Word, let us also ask them what time they have, besides the *Sunday-Evenings*, for attending to their Spiritual Concerns? When else they recollect their past Miscarriages? When they consider to what purpose they were sent into this World? In what manner they have led their Life in it? And whither they are hastening every Day? And what Account they shall be able to give to God, when he shall summon them, by Death, to appear before him? They are, daily, called up *early* in the Morning by their Labours; and they return *late* from them, in the Evening; and very *wearry* we may well presume. The rest of their Time is spent in Eating, Drinking, and Refreshing of themselves; after which, as soon as their Fathers, or their Masters will permit, they hasten them to Bed, and fall to Sleep immediately. Hear, O Father of unbounded Mercies, and incline thine Ear to all who pray for those that pray not for themselves; who let the Sun *rise* every Day, and *set* upon their Heads, without remembering their *Creator*, their *Redeemer*, and their *Judge*! And is not this the *daily* and the *weekly* course, of most Uneducated, Poor, and Labouring People? And how much ought they, then, to value *Sunday*, which gives them easy Opportunities of praying to God, and praising him, of hearing and attending to his Word, of confessing their Sins, imploring his Forgiveness, and of asking every thing they stand in need of? How little a part of such a Day, can they afford to lose, who have taken so little Care, the six foregoing ones? I am not, I must own, for pressing a precise and rigorous Observation of this Day, nor for filling Peoples Heads with false and *Jewish* Notions of its Sanctification. But I would have it carefully observed; the Time allotted for the *Church*, with Gravity, with Seriousness, and all Devotion; part of the rest, in sober Recollections, good Instructions of our Families, and reading some good Book; the other part, in such Discourse, Visit, or Friendly Entertainment, as is consistent with Sobriety, and Virtue, and Religion. Christianity is a most sweet, good-natured Institution, and will allow all easy, inoffensive Freedoms, even upon its highest *Festivals*, or its most Solemn *Fasts*. But let all Rude and Riotous Assemblings; all Clamorous Sports, and boisterous Exercises, and all indecent Liberties both of the Hand and Tongue, be banished from this *Day of Rest, and Holiness*. The *Article* forbids a Man, to work *his own Works*, on this Day, much more the Works that lead so easily to Sin, and most of all, the acknowledged *Works of Darkeness*.

3. Are there any who refuse or neglect to send their Children and Servants to be instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, by the Minister of your Parish, every Lord's-Day, at Evening Prayer?

3. It is the Duty of Parents, and of Masters, to send their Children, and Servants, to be instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion; nor can they do either *them*, or themselves, any greater Service, than in so doing. They make them thereby *wise to Salvation*; and put them in the way of being useful here, and happy hereafter. The Children that are best instructed, are like to be most dutiful and obedient to their Parents; and the Servants that are best taught, are like to be most just and honest to their Masters. Why should they not therefore, take all care, to have them well instructed in the Christian Duties? Children and Servants are very apt to give false Answers, to conceal Truths, and invent Lies, to save themselves from Blame and Punishment. They are very apt to take what is none of theirs, to gratify some present longing they have; very apt to mispend their Time, either in Idleness or Vicious Pleasures, to feed which, they often defraud their Superiors, either by selling their Goods underhand, or by keeping back part of the Price they have received, or by buying too dearly for them; and by many other ways making Advantage of their Ignorance. Now there is no way so likely to keep Children and Servants, from falling into these Offences, and to make them Just, and True, Honest, Faithful, and Conscientious, as the instructing them, and causing them to be instructed, in the Principles of the Christian Religion, which forbids all these wicked Practices, and secures to all Parents, the Duty and Obedience of their Children; to all Masters, the just Gains of their Servants Time and Labour; and to all People, the Truth and Honesty and Justice of each other. And nothing but Religious Principles can make Men truly honest, at all Times, and in all Cases. And if People are not taught these Principles when young, they hardly ever learn them to good purpose. This is the Reason the Church insists so much upon the sending Children and Servants to be Catechised; it is for the publick Good, as well as for their own; the whole *Parish* is the better for dutiful Children and honest Servants; and much the worse for Disobedient, False, Lying, and Thievish Ones. Such therefore as neglect, or refuse to send their Children and Servants to be Catechised, are very fit to be *presented*, in order to their Reproof and Punishment.

4. Have you any in your Parish not yet Baptized?
5. Are there any who have been Baptized, and likewise instructed in the Church-Catechism, and yet have not been confirmed by the Bishop?
6. Are there any Confirmed, and above Sixteen Years of Age, who do not Receive the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, at least three times in the Year, and particularly at *Easter*?

4, 5, 6. I suspect none can come under this 4th Article, but the Children of *Quakers*, and *Anabaptists* (if their Parents died whilst they were young) but if there be any others not Baptized, they ought to be discovered,



covered, that due care may be taken to have them instructed, and then *Christened*. After this, when they come to Years of Understanding, they are to be *Confirmed* by the Bishop, and if above Sixteen Years of Age, are obliged to communicate *three times in the Year at least*. The Children of Believers enter into Covenant with God, by *Christ*, in Baptism, before indeed they understand what any Covenant means, or what is required of those who are to be Baptized; and they are made, thereby, *Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*, without knowing there are any such Persons, Things, or Place. This is a Wonder of Mercy upon God's part; for the Church assures us that—*It is certain by God's Word, that Children, which are Baptized, dying before they commit actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved*. In lieu of this, the Children promise on their parts, but promise by their Sureties, without knowing it, *to renounce the Devil and all his Works, to believe in God, and to serve him*, (*i. e.* they promise Faith, Repentance, and Obedience) which Promise, when they come to Age, themselves are bound to perform. This coming to Age, is coming to Years of Discretion and Understanding; as soon as they come to discern between Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, and know what is commanded and what forbidden. A Child's Knowledge and his Duty grow together. His Understanding is not to be measured by his Years, nor by his Memory, but by his sense of things, and apprehension: And some young ones, we see, will sooner by much than Others, find out their Obligations to God and Man, and set about discharging them. It is then the apprehending what Vows and Promises of Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, their Sureties have laid them under, that is indeed *the coming to Age*, which binds these young People to perform them: *i. e.* as soon as they understand their Christian Duties, they must needs engage to discharge them. Now the Business of *Confirmation* on the Children's part, is the renewing and confirming with their own Mouth, the Promise and Vow which was made by their Godfathers, in Baptism; and acknowledging themselves bound to believe and perform, what was then undertaken for them. I should therefore be glad that none were brought to *Confirmation*, but such as may be well supposed to have some Sense and Understanding of what they undertake, and not be able barely to answer to the Questions of the *Catechism*. I hope that no Body will think himself not bound to perform his Baptismal Vows, because he has not solemnly undertaken to do so, by being *confirmed*: Whether People are confirmed or no, they are under the same Obligations to perform those Vows. *Confirmation* is by no means necessary or *essential* to Baptism; nor *completive* of it. It is an excellent Institution of the Church, and serves to very good purposes, but it is no *Sacrament*; and therefore those who have not slighted, and neglected it, but wanted it, either through Ignorance, or lack of Opportunity, need not be much concerned, although they have received the *Lord's Supper*, without being *Confirmed*. It is sufficient (in the want of Opportunity) that Men be ready for it, and desirous of it, where and when it may be had. And for such as have received the Lord's Supper without it, they are presumed to have done already all that *Confirmation* supposes they should do, and therefore are not proper Subjects of it. Such therefore as have received the Lord's Supper, should not come to *Confirmations*. But when things go Regularly, the Children that have been Baptized, are to be brought to Church and there Catechized, and instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and when they have a Reasonable Sense and Understanding of them, are to be brought to the Bishop and *Confirmed*, and, after that, are, at convenient Opportunities, to receive the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*. The Church supposes them capable of this, at sixteen Years of Age; some are so, before, and others not, even Years after that Age: But a certain time is to be named, and sixteen is as likely an Age as any other. And they are called upon at that Age, because if they enter not, whilst Young, they put it off for many Years, and sometimes do it not at all, till they come to die; whereas by entering early on this Duty, they engage betimes in a Course of Virtue and Religion, which strengthens them against the Temptations to which that warm Age is most liable, and secures them all their Lives after. This supposes also, that all young People should receive the Communion (the first time at least) from the Hands of their proper Minister, in their own Parish Church, which is a thing I would have observed; he is indeed the best Judge of their Capacity, and of their due Preparation.

7. Is any Part of the Stock of the Church, or any Legacy Bequeathed to Pious or Charitable Uses, perverted, or concealed, or otherwise employed than was intended by the Donor, and is it in such Hands as are esteemed Responsible? And do you know of any Augmentations of Vicarages or Curacies? When were they made, and by whom? Are they Registered, and made as Records, as the Law requires?

7. A Man cannot falsify his Trust, with more Injustice and Wickedness in any Instance, than in perverting and concealing the *Legacies*, bequeathed by good People, to the Benefit of Parishes, and Charitable Uses; nor does any thing so discourage the *Living*, from designing and performing these good Works, like the seeing the Charitable Benefactions of the *Dead*, abused or misemployed, if not converted to private Use. No Man can therefore exercise his Zeal, or take Pains on a better Occasion, than in seeing all such Gifts and Legacies employed and put to the Uses intended by the Donors; and in detecting all such Works of Darkness, as would frustrate and make void the good Intentions of those Pious Benefactors. The *Church-wardens* must therefore bestir themselves, and see that in every Parish, there be a good Book, wherein the Names of their *Benefactors* are enrolled: The Time when they died; the Clauses or Parts of their *Wills*, by which they bequeathed either *Money, Land, or Houses*, carefully transcribed, and well attested; together with a full Account where those Houses and Lands lie; and what they are truly worth; how bounded, and in whose Hands they are, and were. But they must take special care of *Money* (which is more perishable, and liable to loss than either *Land* or *Houses*) that it be put into such Hands, as are secure and most responsible; they must trust no Man's Word or Promise, but must have Bond; they must let it continue in no Man's Hand, for fear, or Friendship, without such Security as the Laws allow, and require. All these things should be fairly written, that they may be known to all that are concerned, and be Instructions to the succeeding Trustees, and indeed to all Posterity. These things are to be well looked after, and the *Church-wardens* must



must *present* according to the particular Branches of this *Article*; And, if they should be negligent, the Clergy will, I hope, discover what they know of these Particulars; that we may, all of us, use our best Endeavours, to discountenance all Unrighteous Dealings, and secure the Benefactions of those who are gone before, according to their good Intentions, and encourage Others to do the like.

8. Are there any Wills of Persons Deceased, Concealed, or Unproved?

9. Are any Goods of Persons Dying Intestate, Administred without lawful Authority?

8, 9. The *Concealing*, and *not proving of Wills*, will always make it suspicious, that some Injury is intended to be done to some Parties, that are concerned: For he who intends honestly, *cometh to the Light*; and what he does will bear the Light. The Deceased had a Right to dispose of what was theirs, to what Persons, and in what manner they saw fit. It is therefore a piece of great Injustice to deprive them of this Right, and it is downright stealing from those to whom the Deceased had left any thing, to deprive them of that advantage, by concealing a *Will*, and to transfer it to other People who have no Right to it; this is robbing both the *Dead* and *Living*. The not proving a *Will*, does not always intend or do the same Mischief as *concealing* it, for the Parties concerned, may have the Advantages intended them in the *Will*, though the *Will* is not *proved*, to save Charges. But though this may sometimes happen, yet the Law would leave no place for fraud and underhand dealing, and therefore knows no difference betwixt *concealing a Will*, and *not proving it*: And how shall any one come to know, whether he is, or is not concerned in such a Man's Goods or Estate, but by the *Probate* of his *Will*, which is a *Publick Act*, and done by a *Publick Officer*, to which all People may recur, without enquiring of an *Heir* or *Executor*, whose interest it may be to keep them ignorant? There is also room for great Injustice to be done, by Persons taking upon them to *Administer* the Goods of such as die without *Wills*, who have no Authority to do so; this the Law would remedy, by putting it into the Hands of the *Ordinary* and his *Officers* to give out *Letters of Administration*, to such as have most right to them, and who are likeliest to administer with most Justice and Honesty. And the Laws making these Officers accountable for their Male-administration, there is a great deal of Reason, that no Body else should take upon them to do their Work, without Authority. To do all Right therefore, both to the Living and the Dead, the *Church-wardens* are to *present* all such, as they know, or hear, by common fame, have either concealed any *Will*, or have not proved any *Will*, or have administred the Goods of any one who died without a *Will*, without lawful Authority, empowering them to do it.

10. Are there any who refuse to pay their Rates to the Repair of the Church, and providing Books and other Necessaries for the Service of Almighty God?

10. There is no need of shewing the Reasonableness of all Peoples contributing to the bearing a *Common Burthen*, it is of it self so plain; there should not therefore be so much Trouble given to the Officers, as I hear there is in collecting these Duties: But since nothing else will make these People wiser, *Presentments* must.

11. Are there any in your Parish, whom you know to be common Swearers, Cursers, or Drunkards, or to live in Fornication, Adultery, or Incest, or to lie under the common Fame of such horrid Crimes?

11. Few or no People want to be convinced, that these are great and odious Sins, and fit to be *punished*, as *Job* says, *by the Judge*. The *Guilty* do not, that I hear of, defend their own Practices; nor is there any *Advocate* appears in their Behalf; the *Judges*, I believe, Ecclesiastical and Secular, are ready and inclined to punish, and the *Laws* have taken all Care imaginable to give them Power. From whence, then, can proceed the Impunity of these Offenders? Why, only from the want of Accusers. This is part of the *Church-wardens* Office, and I know not how they will acquit themselves of a great deal of Guilt, and of partaking of other Peoples Sins, but by presenting such as they know are guilty of these provoking Offences; or such as by common Fame lie under such Imputations. Great indeed is the Envy and Malice of some People; and great is the Carelessness of others, in their Behaviour; and others are of weak Judgment, and over credulous, and apt to take up things by Halves, and to misconstrue many others, and willing to find out Faults. And from these Springs arise a great many Calumnies and Slanders, that spread an evil Fame on many People that are innocent: And therefore Care is to be taken that Credit be not given to loose and idle Reports, nor every thing that is said to Peoples Prejudice, be looked upon as *common Fame*, or a Ground of Accusation: But when there is so much Reason, as moves good and honest People to believe and report such things of their Neighbours, who are not otherwise apt to take up Slanders, and ill Speeches against them, there is then Reason enough to present upon *Common Fame*. For, Scandal and Offence are apt to rise where such Reports go current, without Controul or Notice taken, by such as are concerned to look after such Offences. And after all, as bad as the World is, there are but few, who are reputed *Common Swearers, Cursers, or Drunkards*, or who are said to live in *Fornication, Adultery, or Incest*, that are *altogether* wronged by *Common Fame*: The Conduct of such People must be very faulty indeed, that gives Occasion to such Reports, when there is no true Cause for them; and even for *that*, they are responsible.



## TITLE III.

## Concerning Church-wardens and Parish-Clerks.

- I. **A**RE your Church-wardens chosen every Year, according to the Law, and Custom of the Parish?

1. The Office of a *Church-warden*, if well discharged, is not only of great Use, but carries a considerable deal of Trouble with it; and therefore, except some few Privileged Persons, no one is, ordinarily, exempted from bearing it. They are chosen every Year, that no one should be too long burthened with it; and though some Men hold it for two, or three, or more Years, yet they are to be sworn anew into it, every Year, and if they are not so, are not *legal* Church-wardens. They must be chosen every Year in *Easter-Week*, by the Minister and Parishioners; but if they cannot agree, or if the Custom has been otherwise, the Minister chooses *one*, and the Parish *another*, and in some Places, *both* are chosen by the Parish.

2. Have the former Church-wardens given up their Accounts, and delivered the Money, or what else they had belonging to the Church, into the Hands of the present Church-wardens?

2. That the old *Church-wardens* should give up their *Accounts*, and deliver what *Money* and *Church-Utensils* they have, into the Hands of their Successors, is very reasonable, not only to shew they have been honest and faithful Stewards for the Parish, but that the Parishioners may see how the *Rates* and Sums of Money gathered from them, have been expended and laid out; and know, either what they still owe, or what is left over and above for the new *Church-wardens*. These Accounts are for the Satisfaction of the Parish, for the Credit and Discharge of the *Old Officers*, and for Help and Information to the *New*: And where they are neglected to be given up, the People will have great Reason to think themselves cheated and ill used.

3. Is fine White-Bread, and wholesome Wine provided against every Communion, according to the Number of the Communicants, by the Curate and Church-wardens, at the Charges of the Parish?

3. I understand that in some Places of this Diocese, there hath been a Custom, that the *Minister* should be put to provide *Bread and Wine* for all the Communicants at *Easter*, which are probably more, than communicate all the Year besides, to his very great Expence. I am sure there could be no Reason good enough to introduce such a Custom at first, nor is there any good enough to continue it on; and therefore I resolve to have it altered, as being expressly against the *Rubrick*, and the *Laws of the Land*. I have reason to think the Custom is not of long Date or Standing; but be it of what Date it will, it is, and always was *Oppression*; why must the Clergy of those Places, be so ill distinguished from the rest of their Brethren throughout Her Majesty's Dominions? For such a Custom prevails *nowhere else*. I wonder how the Clergy came to suffer, or submit to it, at first, and did not use the Remedy that God had put into their Hands, namely, the *Law*, to repel such an *Injustice*: But it must be suffered no longer; the last Law is not yet fifty Years old, that (by confirming the *Rubrick*) expressly says, *The Bread and Wine for the Communion, shall be provided by the Curate, and the Church-wardens, at the Charges of the Parish*. And the *Rubrick* just before supposes the same thing—*And if any of the Bread and Wine remain unconsecrated, the Curate shall have it to his own Use*. If the *Curate* (which in all these Places is the *Rector*, or *Vicar* to whom the *Cure* of the Parish is committed) were supposed to find the Bread and Wine at his own Charges, how improper had it been, to have given him what no one else could have any Right to? Whereas it is now given him, although it was indeed the *Parish's*, who paid for it. And if it be affirmed, that this Custom only relates to the finding the Bread and Wine at *Easter*, let it be answered, that the Law makes no Difference betwixt *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, or any other Time: For, the very next *Rubrick* that follows says,—*And Note, That every Parishioner shall communicate, at the least, three times in the Year, of which, Easter to be one*; and therefore commands the Bread and Wine to be furnished at the Charges of the Parish, at *Easter* as much as any other Time. The Church-wardens therefore will, I hope, be quickly convinced, how unrighteous such a Practice is, and how directly contrary to the *Law of the Land*; and do herein as they ought to do, and as all the *Parishes* in *England* do, and always have done: And if they will not, must expect to be proceeded against, according to Law, with all Severity.

4. Have you a Parish-Clerk of the Age of twenty-one Years, of Sober Life, and well qualified for his Office?

5. Is he paid his accustomed Salary, Dues, and Perquisites, belonging to his Place?

6. Doth he keep the Church clean, and carefully look to the Books, and all Things committed to his Charge?

7. Doth



7. Doth he Open and Shut the Church-Doors at due Times, and Toll the Bell, or Bells, at the usual Hours before Prayers, that People may have sufficient Warning to come to Church?

4, 5, 6, 7. It is very fit that all who any ways relate to the Church, be of sober Life, and rightly qualified for their Office. The *Parish-Clerks* were heretofore in some low sort of *Orders*, and had their Part in assisting at the Divine Service, and they still keep the Name of *Clerici*, and ought to be of exemplary and good Behaviour. And if they discharge their Office well, especially that Part of it, of *keeping the Church clean*, they will deserve and ought to have their Salary duly paid, and none of their accustomed Perquisites withheld. But if they are negligent, or slovenly in their Churches, or live not soberly, they are to be *presented*, and, if they are found incorrigible, they are to be *removed* from their Places, to make Room for those who will live, and do their Business better.

#### T I T L E IV.

*Concerning the Churches and Chapels, with their Possessions and Utensils.*

1. **I**S your Church or Chapel, with the Chancel, and Tower, or Steeple, in good Repair, and decently kept within and without?
2. Is the Roof well covered, the Windows well glazed, and the Floor kept well paved, plain and even?

1, 2. The Building, Repairing, and Adorning Churches, was heretofore esteemed so meritorious a Part of Religion, that our Forefathers had but little need of being constrained to look after it, by *Laws* and *Injunctions*. I do believe they sometimes placed too much Confidence in such Works, and looked upon them as *Atonements* for great Offences. But what then? Is it not still an Indication of an excellent Devotion, and of a Mind that truly honours God, and intends to promote his Service, to lay out Money upon such Occasions? There is nothing draws so near to Superstition, as an unreasonable Dread of it. When the Rulers of the *Jews* would move our Saviour in Behalf of the *Centurion's* Servant, they come to him and tell him—*He loveth our Nation, and hath built us a Synagogue*, Luke vii. 5. And any one may foretel, without the Gift of Prophecy, that unless this bountiful good publick Spirit, prevail a great deal more among us, and be more encouraged; an hundred Years will bring to the Ground a huge Number both of our *Temples* and our *Synagogues*. In the mean time, all care imaginable must be taken, to keep them up in good Repair; that Men may serve God with Security, with Decency, and Cleanliness, and in the best Order; which things contribute, more than People think of, to the raising and maintaining their Devotion:—There is one thing, I observe, in the Churches I have seen among you, that wants to be amended; and that is, the great *Unevenness* of the *Floors*, occasioned by the frequent *Burials* in the Churches. The way to remedy this, is to make it more *chargeable* to break up Ground in Churches, than it now is; let such a *Rate* be set upon it, as will be sure to pay for the Work of making the Ground even; and this, in time, may repress the Vanity and Pride (for such undoubtedly it is, in mean People) of burying the Dead within the Churches; a thing the Antient Christians forbore to do, for more than six hundred Years, not only out of *Reverence* to those Places that were sacred to the Service of God, but out of *Prudence* also, that the *Dead* might not annoy the *Living*. However, till inconvenient Customs can be *broken*, let us make it as hard as we can to keep them.

3. Is your Church-yard sufficiently fenced?
4. Hath any one incroached upon it, or cut down any Trees that were growing therein?
5. Have any Bells, Lead, Timber, or other Materials of your Church, or Chapel, been embezzelled, and by whom?

3, 4, 5. The *Church-yard* was first inclosed, and consecrated, to be the Common *Burial-place* of the Dead, and therefore is to be carefully fenced and looked after, that no Indecencies may be committed in it, by such Beasts as are apt to root up the Earth, and sometimes uncover Dead Bodies. It is the *Freehold* of the *Incumbent*, and therefore must not be *incroached upon*; the *Trees* are planted there for Ornament, and Shelter, and for Repairing of the *Chancel*, and therefore are not to be cut down for any other use. The embezzelling of any Church-Materials, is just as much mischief and damage to the Parish, as they must be put to, to purchase the like, and therefore such Injustice ought in all Reason to be *presented*, in order to be prosecuted.

6. Have you a decent Font of Stone in your Church, for the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism?

6. People were at first (especially if there was any great number of them) baptized in Rivers, Brooks, Ponds, or other Waters that they met with accidentally. But if single Persons, or private Families were to be Baptized, it is very likely it was done in private Houses, in some convenient Place, or Vessel. *St. Paul* seems



seems to have been so Baptized himself, *Acts* ix. 17. and so to have Baptized the Converted *Jailer*, and his Household, *Acts* xvi. 33. and in all likelihood, it was generally so in times of Persecution; the Christians (though bold to Death, when there was any necessary Call, and just Occasion) never causelessly provoking their Adversaries, either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, by publicly performing their Offices, when they could do it privately, with safety and the same Advantage. But when God had turned the Hearts of the Governors towards them, and the *Empire* was in the Hands of *Christians*, they had liberty to do as they would, and they built great and costly *Baptisteries* (or places to baptize in) sometimes adjoining to, sometimes near, the great Churches; and by degrees came to set up *Fountains* in the manner we now have them, within the Church Doors; they were usually made of *Marble*, or the *hardest Stone* they could get, as well for Cleanliness, and Preservation, as that the Consecrated Water should not be sucked up by a Spongy, or less solid Vessel.

7. Have you a decent Table, commodiously placed in the Chancel, for the Celebration of the Holy Communion, with a decent Carpet always over it, and a fair Linnen-Cloth to cover it when there is a Communion?

8. Have you a Silver Chalice, with a Cover, and a Flaggon of Pewter, or purer Metal, for the Wine, and also a Silver Plate for the Bread, with a fair Linnen-Cloth to cover the Consecrated Bread and Wine?

7, 8. All People who are seriously affected with the Matters of Religion, do immediately fall into this Reckoning, that the greatest and most mysterious Duties of it, are to be performed, not only with the greatest Veneration and *Awe of Mind*, but with the greatest outward Honour and Solemnity. This Conclusion is, in it self, but reasonable and just; and yet, unless it be restrained, with great Prudence, it will grow into great Extravagance, and wonderful Excess. The indulging to this Thought had (in the Days of our Forefathers) loaded the *Altars* of the Churches with *Silver*, *Gold*, and *Precious Stones*; clothed the *Priests* with the finest and most costly *Linnen*, and embroidered *Vestments*; and filled their *Wardrobes* with such Wealth, that, probably, the very hope of spoiling them, was a Temptation to their Adversaries. In a word, the *Blessed Sacrament* was attended with so many gorgeous and surprizingly glittering Circumstances, that the good, plain, simple Duty, seemed to be lost and smothered with its own Pomp, and Ornaments. The *Reformation* set these Matters right again; restored Religion to its liberty, and free breathing, and ordained the Celebration of these holy Mysteries, in such a serious sober manner, so void of all unnecessary Pomp, and Ostentation, that a Man must have but little sense of *decency* and *fitness*, that is offended at it, on the score of *Ceremony*. Nothing but decency, and cleanliness is here enjoined; and I am thoroughly ashamed to think this cannot be obtained in many Places. What shall we say, when the Vessels of the *Lord's House* are of so coarse a Metal, that many People of the Parish could not eat and drink out of the like, *at home*? Let *David* speak to them, as he did to *Nathan*, 2 Sam. vii. 2. *See now, I dwell in an House of Cedar, but the Ark of God dwelleth within Curtains*. He was ashamed of it, and presently resolved to build a *Temple*. Some such Religious Ingenuity, will, I hope, at one time or another, provide becoming Receptacles for the *Sacred Symbols*, in places where that care is not already taken. But, what is wanting in *Cost*, let it be made up in *Cleanliness*. If the *Paten*, and the *Chalice* be not *Silver*, let them be *bright*, and *sweet*, however. Let the *Table* be decent; it is, on these Occasions, the *Lord's Table*. Let it be always covered with a decent *Carpet*; and when there is a Sacrament, with a *fair Linnen Cloth*, with a fine Napkin also to cover the consecrated Elements; not to conceal them from the Peoples Eyes, or make these things *mysterious*; but to beget Respect, and a degree of Seriousness in their Minds on these Occasions, and to prevent some inconvenient Accidents. It is not, I think, enough, to say, that People are to approach the Holy Table, with *clean Hands*, and *pure Hearts*—But there is all the need imaginable of raising up their Minds, quickning their Devotion, kindling their Affection, and fixing their Attention, at these solemn Times, by all the innocent and least artful Methods we can think on; to which I know of nothing that contributes more, than the performance of these Rites, in a grave serious manner, in decent order, and with all the care and cleanliness that can be used.

9. Is there a convenient Reading-Desk and Pulpit?

10. Is there a comely Surplice provided and washed at the Charge of the Parish?

11. Have you a large Bible of the last Translation, with Two Common-Prayer-Books, both in *English* and *Welsh*?

9, 10, 11. As to the reading Prayers in *English*, or *Welsh*, I refer you to what I have said concerning *Preaching*, Tit. I. A. 5. The Edification of the *multitude* is ever to be first in the Minister's Consideration.

12. Have you a Register-Book in Parchment?

13. Are all Persons who are Christened, Married, or Buried in your Parish, duly Registered therein from time to time?

12, 13. The *Registering* Peoples *Christnings*, *Marriages*, and *Burials*, hath often proved of great and useful Consequence. It hath helped to determine Peoples *Age*; the Legitimacy of their *Birth*; and certainty of their *Marriage*, which otherwise might have been disputed; it hath intitled People to certain *Benefits*, that were appropriated for such and such *Places*, *Towns*, *Hundreds*, or *Counties*; and it is, if kept with Care, and according to the Injunctions of the Canons, admitted for *good Evidence*, in Law: And moreover the



Minister knows, by this Book, when People are Old enough to be called upon to prepare for the Communion. It is in truth of so much Use, that it is some wonder how it came not to be publickly injoynd till 1538 or thereabouts. They must have had something or other like it, before that Time; for, many and notable Matters could not possibly be decided, without such *Certificates*.

14. Is the House of your Rector or Vicar, with the Barns, Stables, and all the Out-houses kept in good Repair?

14. I have already spoken to the keeping the Incumbent's House in good Repairs, *Tit. I. A. 2.* But I can pass by no Opportunity of insisting again upon it; it is so fit, so reasonable, so just, and necessary a Tie upon all Clergymen, that if they have any sense of Honesty, or Gratitude to their Religious Founders and Benefactors, they will carefully discharge their Obligation: And have the same Regard to their Successors, which their Predecessors had, or should have had, to Them. By our Ecclesiastical Law the Bishops are required—*To put the Clergy in mind of keeping their Houses in sufficient Reparations.* But what if they neglect to do as they are bid? Why, if they do it not in two Months Time, the Bishop is to take care (by Sequestration of their Benefices) that it be done out of their Profits. *Othob. f. 55. 2.* But to save the Bishop and the Incumbent this trouble, it were much better, the Clergy would follow the *Injunctions* of King *Edw. VI.* in 1547, and the same repeated in 1559 by Queen *Elizabeth*, and set aside the fifth Part of their clear Revenue for this purpose, till all were finished, and afterwards to maintain them in good Condition, which a much less proportion would do. It has been resolved by the Judges in the *King's-Bench*, 12 *Jac. I.* that *Dilapidation is a sufficient Cause of Deprivation.* I should be loth to find a Man fit to be made an Example, of this kind; but truly, I intend to look with much less pity on this Fault, than on many others; because I see that Pity to the present Incumbent, may very easily become Cruelty to his Widow, if she be sued by his Successor, and he recovers Damages of her; or great hardship to that Successor, if he recovers none, and finds his House in a ruinous Condition.

15. Has any Money been left, or paid by any one, to repair the Incumbent's House, which has not been employed to that Use and Purpose?

15. A Man would be unpardonable, who should sue for *Dilapidation-Costs*, and should not expend upon the Premises, what he recovered on that Score: He has *two Years* time allowed to do it in; but, after that, he forfeits to the Queen double to what was recovered but not applied to the proper Use: If any such Fraud or Negligence be known, the Party guilty of it, is to be presented.

16. Have you a perfect Terrier in Parchment, specifying all Lands, Meadows, Orchards, Gardens, Tenements, and Cottages belonging to your Parsonage or Vicarage, and shewing what Tithes, Portions of Tithes, or other Profits within and without your Parish, do belong unto the same?

17. Is one Copy of such a Register kept by the Minister of your Parish, and another delivered into the Bishop's Registry?

16, 17. The Decay of Houses, Barns, and Stables, is a thing that falls under the Eye and Observation of all People that pass by them, and is therefore easily complained of, and may be prevented, or be made Amends for; but the Incroachment upon Lands, Orchards, and Gardens, may be done so insensibly, and by Degrees, that even the Party injured may not be immediately aware of it; or an Incumbent may by Compact, or at least Connivance, take no notice of it; and so it passes from his Successors, without Recompence, and without Remedy, if it be not timely discovered. To prevent these Damages, and Diminutions of the Church's Revenue (whether they be occasioned by the Incumbent's Negligence or Naughtiness) it is required, that an exact and well attested Terrier be made of all Lands, Meadows, Orchards, &c. belonging to the Parsonage or Vicarage; and shewing what Tithes, Portions of Tithes, or other Profits within and without the Parish, do belong to the same. One Copy of this is to be put into the Hands of the Register of the Diocese, and another to be kept by the Incumbent of the Parish, and delivered to his Successors, for their continual Use and Information. I will take this Occasion to advise the Clergy of this Diocese, to write down all the Observations they shall make, in the Course of their Ministry, concerning their Houses, Glebes, Tithes, Modus's, or whatever else they think useful and fitting to be known, and transmit them in a Book, to those who are to follow them; that they may give them all the Light they can, and prepare them against the Practices of a Sett of Men, that are always apt and ready to impose on their New Minister. This I only say by way of Advice; but for the Terrier, I require it without fail, and will not be satisfied, till it be delivered to the Register; that all who shall hereafter have Occasion to consult that Office, may be sure to find their Satisfaction in these Matters; that the Clergy may run into no Inconvenience, by making new unusual Claims themselves; nor suffer the Church to be despoiled of what appears to have been formerly its Right, by others. And I hope the Ignorance in which abundance of Incumbents live of these Matters, will convince them how needful it is, to have a Terrier to inform them, and to which they may appeal.



## TITLE V.

*Concerning Hospitals, School-masters, Physicians, Chirurgeons, and Midwives.*

1. **I**S there in your Parish any Hospital, Alms-house, or Free-School?
2. What Revenue belongs to each of them?
3. Are they governed, and the Revenue employed according to the Will of the Donors?

1, 2, 3. Something I have said already on this Head, under *Tit. II. A. 7.* But that related chiefly to *private Legacies.* These Articles refer to *Publick Charities,* such as *Hospitals, Alms-houses, and Free-Schools.* The Enquiries are, *what is the Revenue belonging to them? And how it is employed?* The Way in many Places of *England,* is, to have the Names of all their *Benefactors* written in a fine, large, and fair Hand, and set up in handsome *Frames,* in such a Part of the Parish Church, as is most conspicuous, and easiest to come at; where all may read—*In what Year, such a Person died, and left such a Sum of Money to such and such Uses; or, so much Land, or Houses, to this or that Purpose.* By this means, all the Parish come to know their publick Benefactors, commemorate them with Praise, and glorify God for them: And by these means, they come to understand, who are qualified for *Hospitals* and *Alms-houses,* and what their Allowance is to be, and *whence* it is to come. I think such a Custom as this might be followed very usefully, in *Wales,* it being naturally fitted to prevent the Misapplication, Abuse, or perverting of Publick Charity. But, whatever other Courses may be taken to secure the employing these Benefactions according to the Donor's Will, the *Bishop,* as the general Overseer of all good Works within his Jurisdiction, is to enquire, whether they are indeed employed, and used, as they ought? And to that purpose, every honest good *Church-warden,* will contribute all he can, by making honest, true and faithful Answers to these *Articles:* And should they fail in this their Duty, I question not but the *Incumbents* will do all Justice to themselves and Me; and indeed to all the Dead and Living, that are concerned in these Benefactions.

4. Doth any one in your Parish teach School publicly or privately, without License from the Ordinary?
5. Doth the School-master come to Church himself, and cause his Scholars also to come duly at the Times of Divine Service?
6. Doth he diligently instruct his Scholars in the Church-Catechism?
7. Do any in your Parish practise Physick, or Chirurgery, or undertake the Office of a Midwife, without License?

4, 5, 6, 7. It is of great Consequence, both to the Parents, and the Children (not to mention here the Common-wealth) what sort of Men are trusted with the Education of young People. And therefore the *Laws of the Land,* which acknowledge, own, and encourage, no other Church-Government, but what is *Episcopal* (though they both tolerate, and defend from Penalties, all that dissent from it, and call themselves *Protestants*) will have no *School-master,* either publick or private, but what shall be allowed and licensed by the *Bishop,* 23 *Eliz. c. 1. §. 6.* and 1 *Jam. I. c. 4.* and 14 *Ch. II. c. 4.* and *Canon 77. 79.* and although these Laws are of much elder Date than the *Act of Toleration;* yet whoever shall read it carefully, will find they are not, in this Particular, voided and annulled by it. *Statutes* are not removed by *Construction, Consequences,* or imagined *Inferences,* but by expresse and positive *Revocation* and *Repeal* of them. And therefore no Body has yet leave to teach Scholars, but such as shall be licensed thereto, by the *Bishop;* all others are, and ought to be *presented,* and are as liable to Penalties as formerly they were.

## TITLE VI.

*Concerning Church-Officers.*

1. **H**A T H any Church-Officer, Register, Proctor, or Apparitor exacted more than their ordinary and legal Fees?
2. Have any of them for any Reward, Excused, or unduly Dismissed any Offender that hath been presented?
3. Hath any Apparitor cited any Person unlawfully, without a Citation first had from the Court?
4. Hath any taken a Reward for concealing any Offence, or avoiding the Punishment of the Offender?



5. What Commutations have you heard have been paid by Offenders, and to whom, since the last Act of Grace, in 1709?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The Corruption and Exaction of *Ecclesiastical Officers* is very carefully to be looked after, presented, and pursued to Punishment. That those who are employed in correcting the Abuses, and Enormities of *Others*, may by no means escape *themselves*, if guilty. And, to this End, if any one be afraid to make a *publick Presentment* of their Offences, let them take care to give me Notice in as *private manner* as they will, (but with all Truth and Certainty) wherein they are aggrieved; that Order may be taken for their Redress, and the Removal of such Offenders.

HAVING gone through these *Articles* in the plainest and most useful manner I could think on, I have now a few things to say to you distinctly, *my Brethren of the Clergy*; they have not, indeed, any Relation to the *Articles* foregoing, but I fasten them to them, for the better Conveyance of them, and that you might have them always by you. I have had (and shall again have, when it pleases God) occasion to ordain *Priests* and *Deacons*, and to *Collate* and *Institute* to *Benefices*, when they shall be vacant, in my *Diocese*, such as I shall judge to be duly qualified; But I must, in a great measure, depend upon the *Testimonials* of the *Clergy*, for the Virtue and good Behaviour of such as come either to be *Ordained* or *Instituted* by me; because I cannot be presumed to know them personally myself. My Request is therefore to you all, that before you give your Hands to any one's *Letters Testimonial*, you would seriously consider these few following Particulars.

*First*, Whether you are *personally* acquainted with the Party to be recommended by you; or only Subscribe upon the Credit of those you write under; and think with your selves, if this last Part be fit to offer to your Bishop, either in Conscience, or good Breeding?

*Secondly*, Whether, if you are personally acquainted with the Party, you are truly perswaded that he is *indeed* what you have represented him, in your *Certificate*; I do not mean in the most rigorous and exact Interpretation of Words, according to the *Letter*, but in such a fair and equitable Sense, as wise and honest People take them, and use them in their Intercourse with one another?

*Thirdly*, Although the Party may be honestly recommended by you, as a Person both of good Learning, and good Manners, yet whether you truly think him fitly qualified for the *Order of Priesthood*, or of a *Deacon*, or for such a *Benefice*, or *Cure*, as the *Letters Testimonial* are designed to recommend him to. For, certainly, a Man may be a good Scholar, and a good Man, and yet not fit to be ordained a *Priest* or *Deacon*, by reason of some Imperfections. And a Man may be a good *Priest*, and yet not fit for such or such a *Cure*, or *Benefice*, as it may happen, upon many Accounts. I think you cannot but see the Reasonableness of considering these few Things, when you are sought to, for subscribing *Testimonials*. And I would have you (if you please) imagine I am by, and wanting to be satisfied in those Demands; and that you give by your *Subscription* the same Account, you would to me *in Person*. But, it were better still, if you would seriously reflect upon the Mischief you may do, and on the Guilt you may contract your selves, by leading me into Mistakes, and causing me, by giving Credit to your Names, to put unworthy People into the Ministry, or to prefer unworthy Ones to *Benefices*, *Cures*, or *Schools*. How will you answer this to God, to Me, or to the Places where these People must officiate, who may be greatly injured by these means, and that for many Years? I intreat you therefore, by the Power of these Considerations, not to suffer your selves to be corrupted, by the Facility of your Temper, your Easiness and good Nature, by Importunity, by Friendship, or the Fear of any Man, nor by the Hopes of receiving the like Favour, to give your Name to any one's *Certificate* or *Letters Testimonial*, unless you secretly, and in your Heart, approve of what you say therein. I cannot ask less (nor do I ask any more) than that you would not induce Me to believe of Men, what you do not *your selves* truly believe of them. It may be, some of you will think these Terms are hard, and hinder you from paying Acts of Friendship and Civility to one another, by making it so difficult to subscribe your Names, upon Occasion. In answering to this, I say, let *Truth* and *Justice* go along with *Friendship* and *Civility*, and then the more of them, the better. But where those things are separated, Civility to Men is Rudeness, Injury, and Mischief to Religion; and such a *Friendship of the World* is, as St. James tells us, *Enmity to God*. One of my Aims is indeed, hereby to have the Clergy live in friendly Awe, and Respect of one another; that they may so behave themselves, both to their Brethren, and their People, that when there is Occasion for a Character, it may be both unreasonable and unjust, to refuse a good one to each other. There will be always Room enough (in spite of all the Care that can be taken) for the Partialities of *Acquaintance*, *Neighbourhood*, and *Inclination*, to take Place, in *Letters Testimonial*; and therefore I have no Apprehension of creating any Misunderstanding among the Clergy, by requiring this Exactness at their Hands. I only hope to stir up such a Jealousy among them, that, unless they live virtuously and studiously, they shall despair of getting their Neighbour's *Hand* and Approbation, when they stand in need of it; without which, they will in vain attempt to make their way to any Favours I can shew them. I will always pay, you may be sure, that Deference that is due, to the Characters the Gentlemen of the *Laity* think fit to give the *Clerks* they now and then recommend to me. But I, who am convinced that the Clergy know each other much better, and in another manner, than most Gentlemen can do, shall never be content to take a Clerk on Trust, without the Testimonials of his Neighbouring *Brethren* of the *Ministry*. And therefore let it be a Rule among you, that you make your selves as valuable as you can, each to the other; for, certainly, the Esteem you shall derive from thence, will be of greatest Use and Service to you.

I press this Matter of an honest, true, and Conscientious Subscription of *Letters-Testimonial*, with a more than common Zeal and Fervency, not only because I am obliged to do it, by the *Canons* and *Injunctions* of my *Superiour Metropolitan*, but from a little Indignation I have also had, to find my self presented with some *Certificates*, well signed and sealed indeed, but which I thought, had little Regard to Truth in them. I have forgotten, and shall to all Intents and Purposes forget, those Names, if they do not refresh my Memory by coming again in my Way upon the like false Errand: I promise my self they never will; and hope that whenever you subscribe your Name to *Letters-Testimonial*, you will not fail to make some Conscience (as we say) of imposing on your *Bishop*; who has it in his Heart (and bows his Knees, in Thanks to Him that put it there) to do you all the Good he can, according to the Measure of his Skill and Power.

Another



Another thing, wherein I would require your Care and Caution, is in the Matter of *Titles*. A Bishop is not Allowed by the *Canons*, to Ordain any one, without a *Title*, i. e. unless he has a Right to some means of Livelihood and Subsistence, either by an Estate in his own Hands, or by way of Recompence for doing Duty. If He neglect this Rule, he is, it seems, obliged to provide the Party so Ordained some Place in the Church, and to furnish him with all Necessaries till he has done it, *Can. 33*. The Wisdom of this Rule may appear, in part, by the Infamy and Scandal, which those few miserable Men bring upon the Church, who stroll about the World like Impudent and Vagrant Beggars; and shew their *Orders* for a *Past*, to licence them as it were, to do their Sacred Function all the Dishonour they can; this *Canon* would prevent these Scandals, in great measure, by forbidding such to be ordained, who have no present settled maintenance, nor are in any near and reasonable prospect of one. You know the Bishop of *this Diocese*, is so great a *Patron*, that you can hardly bring a *Title*, for *Ordination*, but it must be the certainty of some *Curacy* within his Patronage. Now I am very well assured, that not one *Third part* of the Benefices (I would I could not say *Half*) within my Jurisdiction, can bear the Charge of keeping a *Curate*; I would not therefore have the *Rectors*, or the *Vicars* of such poor Benefices pretend to give a *Title* of *Curate*, when every Body knows they have much to do to live themselves, upon their Profits. Age and Infirmities, and long continued Absence, must indeed be evermore considered, as Reasons for the keeping Curates, even in small and poor Parishes; but those are Cases that cannot lie concealed from me. Where nothing of this happens, I intend not to admit such Promises of Curacies, for *Titles*. In a word, whatever *Titles* are offered to me for *Orders*, shall be *Real Titles*. They who certify to me, that they admit such or such a One, to be their *Curate*, shall certainly have him for their *Curate*, and shall pay him as their *Curate*, and that, not for the present turn, a *Week*, or *Month*, or *Quarter*, but as long as I shall judge convenient. For since it is this *Collusion* that helps, above all other ways, to overstock the Church with Labourers, I think we cannot guard too much against it, where they are so little wanted. I desire, therefore, all that are concerned, as well *Rectors* and *Vicars*, as those who shall come to be *Ordained*, to take this Intimation for a timely warning, what *Certificates* to send or bring to me; for I have told them what I will accept, and what shall find no Place with me; and after this, they will owe their Disappointments to themselves, if they come not rightly qualified. I do also require them to give me a *Fortnight's* Notice before the *Ordination Sunday*, that I may have Time to enquire about them; and, together with this Notice, to send me their *Age*, *Country*, *College*, *Degree*, and the Place where they have last lived, together with *Letters Dimissory*, if they belong to any other *Diocese*.

Another thing I have to mention to you, is, That all who are not discharged by *Act of Parliament*, from paying *Tithes*, should do it punctually, *every Year*, at the Time appointed. It was before an *Act of Justice*, and to be paid like other stated *Taxes*: But now it is become (through the unexampled Goodness of the *Queen*) an *Act of Charity* also to our poor *Brethren* of the *Clergy*, to whose Relief and Comfort it is designed and given. That *Royal Bounty* is, every Day, preparing, by wise Methods, to be made most useful and extensive. And I gladly take this Opportunity, of acquainting you, in short, how that Affair stands; that you may no longer wonder, nor causelessly complain, that the *Fruits* of so excellent a Design have hitherto appeared so small. It is, I assure you, through no one's Fault, or Negligence: There is neither want of good Will, nor of Application, in the Parties concerned, to whom these Matters are entrusted; but a most Noble and Religious Zeal appears, to answer the good Purposes for which they are incorporated. The yearly Revenue of the *First-Fruits* and *Tithes*, did usually (at a *Medium* of twenty Years) amount to about 17000 *l. per Annum*. But this was charged with *Grants*, and *Pensions* (and many of them for *Life*) to the Amount of about 11000 *l. per Annum*, besides an *Arrear* of upwards of 20000 *l.* which was to be discharged, and has for some Years last past been, and is still discharging. From this Revenue there has been a Deduction made of something more than 3000 *l. per Annum*, by discharging the *Tithes* of as many *Small Livings* (under 50 *l. per Annum*) as amounted to that Sum. So that the 17000, is reduced to 14000, out of which the *Grants* and *Pensions* must be paid, which, by Death, and other prudent Methods of the Governours, are now also reduced to between 9 and 10000 *l. per Annum*. So that, allowing a Decrease of *First-Fruits*, by the foresaid Discharge of *Small Livings*, the *Governours* will not have (according to the best Computation I can make) above 3000 *l. per Annum* to dispose of, till it pleases God to order otherwise. This is the State of the Revenue, when I have added, that there is a Debt of some Thousand Pounds to be recovered by the *Governours*, in some reasonable Time. Now, whoever can consider the *Incumbrances* that lay, and yet do lie, upon this Revenue, and can conceive how intricate and perplexed, Accounts of so many Years standing must needs be, and how difficult a Thing it is, to settle great Designs of *Charity*, in such a Method, at first, as shall not quickly call for Repentance and Alteration—Whoever can put these things together, will easily account for the Time that has already been spent, and for the little Effect this gracious Benefaction of the *Queen* may seem as yet to have taken. Assure your selves, my *Brethren*, that where so many different Rules, and Methods, are, and must have been offered, and so many particular things of weight to be considered, before a Settlement can possibly be made to any purpose, the more Time it takes in doing, the better it will certainly be done, when done. Delays, in this case, are not dangerous, but tend to more security. But, methinks, I need not make an Excuse, for the little that has been done; the Discharge of as many Livings from paying *Tithes*, as amounts to more than 3000 *l. per Annum*, is the having already given (at twenty Years Purchase) upwards of Sixty thousand Pounds to the Poor Clergy. God, of his Goodness, return it, into her Royal Bosom, Sixty thousand fold! This I have observed to you, a little (as it were) out of my Way. The thing I at first intended was, to advise you to be punctual in your Annual Payments of *Tithes*, because this great and good Design will depend very much upon the ready Payment of our Dues at the appointed Time. And also because I intend, neither my *Self*, nor my *Executors*, shall run any hazard, by your *Delays*, or *Non-solvency*. Whoever shall not punctually discharge his *Tithes*, shall very punctually be returned *Non-solvent* to the *Exchequer*, and take his Fortune there. I have known such ill Effects of Pity, wrong placed, on these Occasions, that I will not venture them. And I hope this warning will suffice to prevent all such Miscarriage.

There is another thing, which I am going to desire of you, in which, I will own, my *Curiosity* has a great share; but which, I hope, may, some Time or other, tend also to the Benefit of some Parishes. I desire to know the true *Names* of your Parishes, and if there be more Names than One. The *Saints* to whose Memory they were dedicated, and what Day the *Wakes* (if there be any) are kept. What *Superstitious Usages* are still observed by the Common People, under the Name of *Antient Customs*. How many *Families* there may be in the Parish, and what the Number of Communicants at *Easter* (in these things, I look not



for exactness, but according to a reasonable way of reckoning, and general guess.) How many *Townships*, what their *Names*, and to whom the *Tithes* of them are paid, and their reputed *Valuation per Annum*. And if you have any remarkable *Monuments* in your Churches, I should be glad you would transcribe them for me, at your leisure. These things, I hope, will not put you to much pains, to write in a Sheet of Paper, and offer them to me, at the *Visitation*; as also whatever you shall think fit to communicate to me, which you would not *publickly* present or complain of; if you Seal them up, I will take care they shall be still *Sealed* to all besides my self, till it be fit to make them manifest, and, even then, it shall be to no one's prejudice.

I have now a few things to say to you, in *general*, and shall then put an end to these Papers. And,

*First*, I cannot choose but hope that you do, every Day, either at Church, or at your Houses, offer to God the continual Sacrifice of *Prayer* and *Thanksgiving*, as well for the long Life, and Health, and Preservation, and Prosperity of the *Queen*, as also for the manifold good Gifts, Virtues, and Graces, that we see Her exercise continually, and daily improving in. This we should, all of us, do, did Conscience of our *Duty* only move us; but Her Deservings towards *Us*, are such, that *Gratitude* and *Sense of Justice* will constrain us to add all Zeal and Fervour possible to our Devotions. God has, indeed, made Her a *Nursing-Mother* to the *whole Nation*, and given Her the Hearts of all Her People, in a fuller measure, than He has to any Prince, within our Memory: But yet her Birth, her Education, her Reason, Inclination, and true Interest, must needs have filled her Heart with all the favourable Prepossessions to the *Church of England* (above all) that even that Church could want, or wish for. And therefore, sure the Clergy of *that Church* will evermore be trying to distinguish it self by Acts of Love, and Duty, and Obedience to her, if it be possible, above all other Subjects. Not in exalting Her *Prerogative* above what our *Constitution* allows; nor in asserting a *Power*, to which the *Laws of the Land* are Strangers, and know nothing of, (for that, *my Brethren*, is as well a *Snare* to *Princes*, as an *Entanglement* to *Subjects*) but in pressing, upon all Men, a dutiful and conscientious Obedience to *Her Laws*; by which the Honour and the Safety of Her Person and Government are best preserved. It is not for *Princes* to side with any *Party*, but to make use of all. They are the *Common Parents* of their Country, and will dispence their *Justice* with an equal Hand to all; but they who best *deserve*, will share their *Graces* and their *Favours* in the greatest Plenty: And that, I hope, will ever be the *Church of England*, properly so called.

You do, in the next place, pray as constantly, in course, for the Princess *Sophia*, and you know the meaning of that is, for the Succession of the *Protestant Line*, in the Illustrious House of *Hanover*. There our *Laws* have placed the Crown, and there our *Prayers* and our *Endeavours*, will, I hope, for ever keep it. We have had but two *Popish Reigns*, since the *Blessed Reformation of Religion*; and both of them were, God be thanked, of very short continuance: But what Alarms, what Disturbance and Distraction did they give, what mighty Mischiefs did they do this Kingdom! The *first* of them did cheaply pour, like Water on the Ground, the Blood of a World of innocent and harmless People, for no other Cause, but that they could not against their Conscience, comply with *Papery*. The *Laws of the Land* were then upon the side of that Cruel false Religion, and authorized the kindling those devouring Fires, that consumed so many *Protestants*. Insomuch that if God, in his Mercy, had not shortened those Days, the Name of the *Reformation* had been no more in Remembrance. For it is in the Nature, it is interwoven in the frame and make of that furious *Superstition*, never to spare what it calls *Heresy*, when it has the Power of destroying it: And I challenge all the World, to give an unexceptionable Instance to the contrary. Shall we ever run this Risk again? Will you not, all of you, say with me, *God forbid that we should ever try again the Mercy of a Popish Government!* I say the less of the *other Popish Reign*, because I trust to the Remembrance, and the Senses, of all Reasonable observing People. And I should despair of being much heeded, should I give any Caution for the *future*, by those who have so soon forgotten the *past* Fears and Dangers, they were in. But though we should incline to spare the Name of a *Prince*, to whom we once both owed and payed the Obedience of good Subjects, and who, moreover, was the Father of *two such Queens*, yet let us never so forget those Days, as not to thank God heartily, that they passed away so soon; and, that the Legislative Power hath done what it could to prevent the like, for the Time to come, by enacting (as by the 14th of *Elizabeth*, it appears they might) that *no Papist shall hereafter be King or Queen of England*; and settling the Succession in the *Protestant Line*. God grant it may be very long, before that *Act of Parliament* take place, but God forbid that any thing should ever interrupt the *Protestant Succession*. This is the *Royal Family*, that we are understood to pray for.

You do, in the last place, pray for *Bishops*, and *Curates*, and all *Congregations* committed to their Charge: And as I always try to put *my own Clergy*, in a more particular View, when I either repeat, or hear this Prayer; so I do seriously desire, that they would always have *Me* in their Minds, on the like Occasions. And since the Providence of God hath placed *Me*, through the Favour of the *Queen*, in the highest Order of Church-Ministers, I am sure I have thought my self the better, for being, in a more immediate manner, the Subject of so many good Peoples Prayers, as are daily offered up to God, in our Excellent *Publick Service*. We do, indeed, stand in need of all our Peoples Prayers, and all the Assistance of the Grace of God, and all that our Reason, Observation, and Experience can afford, to direct us in our Ways; for we are, methinks, encompassed with unusual, unexpected Difficulties\*. Whence comes it that the Times seem so much more unequal to some Men of this *Sacred Order*, than they are to Others? From what infected Quarter does this Mischiefe rise? Are they not full as Learned, Virtuous, and Religious, as their Brethren, or their Predecessors? Shew they not equal Zeal for the Glory of God, the Honour of *Christ's* Revelation, and for the Souls of Men, the Purchase of his Blood? Walk they not prudently and circumspectly, shewing themselves *Patterns in all good things*? What part of Duty is it, that they are defective in? Is Malice so restrained, as not to tell them of their Faults? Or are their Enemies so tender of their Credit and good Name? And yet if you should trace these Clamours to a Head, you will find they end in this poor, senseless Accusation, that *they are not good Churchmen*. Great God! That Men of the most valuable Abilities, and learned in all kinds; beloved of all that know them, for their Candor and good Nature; famed for their Prudence, and venerable for their Piety and Goodness; of exemplary Charity; assiduous Preachers; constant Frequenters of the *Common-Prayers*; and, in a word, who whilst they were *Parish Priests*, did every way adorn their holy Calling—That these Men, when they came to be *advanced*, should cease immediately to be good

\* This was in 1709-10, and things are not much mended, since that, as I suppose.



*Church-men !* My Heart, I own it, is too full of Indignation and Disdain, to give a serious Answer to such Calumnies. I rather humbly beseech God, to forgive those Men their great Trespas, who have either invented, spread, or cherished them. But be not you, *my Brethren*, Partakers of their Sin, by harbouring such ill Thoughts; or countenancing such Reports. *Speak not evil of these Dignities.* I know I am the unworthiest of them; but yet I bind it on your Consciences, to entertain a good Opinion of me, till you find cause to do otherwise. I shall not else be able to do any good among you. I speak not this, from any Reason or Suspicion I have that I am not as much esteemed by all of you, as I desire to be. But what can I expect? What have I not to fear, when Men of so much greater Caution, Prudence, Virtue, and Religion, fare so ill? Had *Papists* been the Spreaders of these Slanders, I should not much have wondered, because they are such hearty Lovers of whatever may discredit us, or weaken our Influence with our People, that, I account, we are obliged to them, if they only report, and are not the *Authors* of them. But these are not the Wounds of *Enemies*, but of *Companions, Friends, and Children.* But after all, what is the ground and occasion of this Outcry? If I can guess aright, it is this. The Bishops, for these twenty Years last past, have behaved themselves with that good Temper, Moderation, and Paternal Gentleness, that they have gained more ground upon the Hearts of the *Dissenters*, than had been done for an hundred Years before, by all their Predecessors: And yet, they have not parted, (that I know of) with one Point of *Doctrine*; one Point of *Discipline*; one *Church* or *Chapel*; one Line of the *Common-Prayer*; nor one external *Ceremony.* But it may be they *would* if they *could.* It is Time enough to answer those Suspicions, when better Proof of their Inclination appears. I have as much Reason to say, and I do say it, that whenever they do part with any thing, belonging to the Church, my Life for yours, they will have something *equal* to it, in Exchange. They have, as yet, parted with nothing; made no Advances, no Proposals, no Concessions. They have only purchased the Reconciliation, and Benevolence of those People who dissent from our Church, by a Management that is truly Wise, and truly *Christian.* And I am verily persuaded, that the best and wisest of their Predecessors would have taken the same Courses, had the Situation of Affairs been the same, and the like Seasons and Opportunities concurred.

But how does it appear, that the *Dissenters* have been gained upon, by this good Treatment? Allow them to be *Men*, and you will see something of what I say; for all Men love *Humanity*, and all Mens Hearts are won upon by *gentle Treatment.* But does it not appear by plainer Tokens? Have they not (many of them) manifestly changed their Stile, and way of Expression? Have they not changed their Manners and Behaviour towards Church, and Churchmen? Do their Writings seem to proceed from such a furious bitter Spirit as they used to do? Do they insist upon such rigorous Terms of Church-Communion as they formerly did? Do they treat our *Service*, or our *Ceremonies*, with the antient Scorn and Contempt? Have they not spoken decently, and respectfully of *Bishops*? I may not insist on all Particulars—I affirm, that since the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*, the Bishops of the *Church of England*, were never held in that Esteem and Value by the *Dissenters*, as they now are, and have been for these twenty Years; and that for doing nothing but what did always become Wise Men, and good *Christians* to do, so circumstantiated as they are. And is it not astonishing, that that which is, in truth, matter of Praise and Honour, should be turned into an Accusation? For (to come to the Point I am upon) I have never seen a better Cause assigned, why some *Bishops* should not be thought *good Churchmen*, than that they have treated the *Dissenters* with more Condescension and less Acrimony, and have been treated by *Them*, with more Civility, Respect, and Honour, than was heretofore the Custom to do, on either side. And I leave it to all the World to judge, whether the Bishops are to change their *Conduct*, or those who blame them, their *Opinion.* I meant not, by what I have said, to make an *Apology* for any of *my Brethren*, and Most honoured *Colleagues*, Dead or Living; their good Example wants not to be *justified*, but *followed* by Me. And herein I should but do, as they have done, *viz.* pursue the Advice given to the Clergy of his Province, by Archbishop *Sandcroft* in 1688—"More especially, "that they have a very tender Regard, to our \* *Brethren the Protestant Dissenters*: That, upon Occasion "offered, They visit them at their Houses, and receive them kindly at their own; and treat them fairly "where-ever they meet Them: Persuading Them, if it may be, to a full Compliance with our Church, "or at the least, that *whereunto we have already attained, we may all walk by the same Rule, and mind the "same Thing*—And that They warmly and most affectionately exhort Them to join with us in daily "servent Prayer to the God of Peace, for an Universal Blessed Union of all *Reformed Churches*, both at "Home and Abroad, against our Common Enemies."

But I have said these things, to shew upon what poor Occasions, many People, who love the *Order*, have yet parted with their Respect for the *Persons* of their Bishops: And to caution you (for whom I am most concerned) against the falling in, with any such unreasonable Suspicions. Take heed of every thing that may lessen the Respect you owe to your Superiors; for when that Bond is broken, who can tell but *Hatred* or *Contempt* will follow? And then you know how little good can possibly be done, by any one. You may make it your own Case, with Respect to your private *Parishes*, and think how ineffectual all your best Labours would be, if your People were either prejudiced against your Person, or suspected you of any ill Designs.

I see I have exceeded the Bounds I had set my self; but my Zeal for so much injured Worth, hath occasioned it, and must excuse the Length. I neither am, nor have at any time been concerned, my self, in any of those Affairs, or Controversies, that have occasioned the Divisions, and Distinctions, that have so long troubled Us. But I have not been an Unconcerned Spectator of the Mischiefs they have done; nor can I help the apprehending, with pain, the Mischiefs that they will go on doing to the End. And in that View, I could not refrain from warning every one of you, from having any Hand in cherishing and keeping these Divisions up, amongst us.

God of his infinite Goodness, grant, that you and I, and every one of us, may every Day we live, remember the Relation we bear to each other, and to the Flocks committed to our Care, and so attend to the Discharge of our good Office, that when the Shepherd and the Bishop of our Souls shall call us to account, each for the Other, we may do it with Joy, and not with Grief.

Westminster, Febr. 16.  
1709-10.

I am your most affectionate Brother,  
and humble Servant,

W. ASAPH.

\* From this Passage the ordinary Reader will, I believe, conclude that Archbishop *Sandcroft* thought, both the *Dissenters* at home, and the *Protestants* abroad, to be *Christians* at least.



## The Thirteenth Chapter to the *R O M A N S*, Vindicated from the Abusive Senses put upon it.

Written by a *Curate* of *SALOP*; and directed to the *Clergy* of *that County*, and the Neighbouring Ones of *North-Wales*; To whom the Author wisheth Patience, Moderation, and a Good Understanding, for Half an Hour.

**M**Y Business having drawn me up to *London* in the Winter, I had the Opportunity of Hearing the *Trial* of the famous Doctor, from the Beginning to the End: and was thereby informed of abundance of Things, of which I was before ignorant; and enabled, as I thought, to set *you* right also, and to correct a great many Mistakes, into which I found We had all of us been led. When I first came to *Town*, it was between the Preaching of his Sermon, and his being *Impeached* for it: and I believe, I may safely affirm, there were not Ten Men of Sense and Character, in all the *City*, but did absolutely condemn that Discourse, as a Rhapsody of incoherent ill-digested Thoughts, dressed in the worst Language that could be found. They said it became not a *Minister* of the Gospel, for the Spirit with which it was composed; nor a *Doctor*, for the Argumentative Part of it; nor a tolerable *Englishman*, for the Style and Expression. In a word; neither the *Matter*, nor the *Manner* of the *Sermon* pleased any one. This, I am sure, was then the Untainted Judgment of the *Town*. The Man was thoroughly despised, both by his Friends, and Enemies, for this Performance. Upon the *Impeachment* indeed Matters were much changed, and the Sermon mended strangely. The *High-Church* Party took the *Sermon*, and the *Preacher*, into their Protection, and made his Cause their own; not changing their Opinion, nor valuing *either* at the Price of a Pin, but making it a Handle and Occasion of bringing their lost and abandoned Cause into Countenance again, and of playing their Game anew with more Advantage. They gained at first on the *devout and honourable Women*, who whispered back to them, That if they had the Courage to resume the Posts they had been lately driven from, there never was an Opportunity more favourable than now: I may not tell you abundance of Things that I then heard from good Hands: We quickly saw how the Cause thrived in its Management, and what Arts were used to make weak People believe, *the Church was endangered* in that *Trial*, and *Tried* together with her *Champion*: This was then the Talk of credulous Women, shallow Men, and of young Preachers, and of many of my Countrymen and *Fellow Curates*; from whom, I doubt not, our Neighbour \* stole the Thought, and put it into his *elegant Address*. Whereas to Me, the *Church* appeared to be no more concerned in This Dispute, than the Mountain, at whose bottom my House stands. The Dispute, I plainly saw, was who should have the good *Places*, the profitable *Posts*, and *Offices* of *Honour*. The *Peace* was then in View, and both Sides began to bestir themselves; the One to *keep* the Seats they were already in, the Other to *remove them*, and place their Betters in; imagining, that as Things settled at *the Peace*, there they would fix and continue. But let them settle where they will, the *Church*, I dare engage, will be no whit the better, unless we will account that half a score Seditious, Bold *Incendiaries*, are *the Church*. *These* indeed will be Gainers, as you will shortly see; and that will be all the Advantage the *Church* will get by this warm Controversy.

\* Sir J. Ra——on.



There is nothing so conceited as a Man that has lately been at *London*, and let into some *Secret History*, and kept Company for an Hour or two, with some *Great Folks* above his Quality. This, I own, was my Condition, and I believed that as soon as I should get down into the Country, I should carry all before me, and quickly convince you, that you had wrong Notions of Things, understood very little of the Springs of publick Affairs, and were carried away into a Thousand Errors. That you are still as blind as *Beetles*, I am very sure; but that you are capable of being convinced, and set right in any of these Matters, is what I now doubt very much; since I have seen you so unanimous in affirming the Doctor to be a *Man of Parts*, and *great Defender of the Church*, and that the *Church's* Interest and *His* were inseparable; and that all who were *against Him*, were *Enemies to the Church*, with a great many such like foolish and absurd Propositions. When I saw this, I easily forgave your counting *Six* to be more than *Seven*, and *Fifty-two* to be as many again as *Sixty-nine*: These I thought might better be maintained, (by opposing *Weight* to *Number*) than the other, which betrays such a Defect of Judgment, as is not to be rectified or remedied. But that which gave me most trouble, in all our Bickerings, was, methoughts, that obstinate, vexatious Citation of *The 13th Chapter to the Romans*, which was thrown at my Head upon all Occasions. I could not mention the *Revolution*, *K. William*, the *H. of C—*, *Liberties of the Subject*, nor any thing like them, but presently I was desired to look into the *13th Chap. to the Romans*. I no sooner urged that *Sir S. H.* and all the Doctor's *Council* had defended the *Revolution* and the *Resistance* that brought it about, as strenuously and openly, and in as plain Terms, as the *Managers* themselves had done; and that the present Archbishop of *Y.* had given up all that they contended for, in making the *Laws of the Land the Measure of the Subjects Submission and Obedience*; as good *K. Charles the I.* had owned the *Law to be the Measure of his Power*, in His *Declaration* from *New-Market*, *March 9. 1641.* I had, I say, no sooner urged these things, and others to the like Purpose, but that a *Bible* was brought, which opened of it self at the *13th Chapter to the Romans*, and I was bid to see what I could make of it. This, as I was a *Curate*, gave me more Concern than all you said besides, and so I resolved to see and read that Chapter through and through, and give you my Thoughts of it; which I now send you in *Print*, for the Edification of my Country, and good Neighbours. It cost me the more Pains, because I was to spin it (as it were) out of my own Brains, not being allowed, as it should seem, to consult any *Commentators*, either of the *Popish* or *Protestant Party* abroad; since I was every Day told, that the *Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance*, was a *Doctrine Peculiar to the Church of England*. Now although a Doctrine seldom recommends it self to me by its *Peculiarity*; yet I thought it would be to no Purpose to cite either *Protestant* or *Popish* Writers favour it so little as they do: Nor is it a little absurd, to say a Doctrine is *Peculiar* to a Church, when it pretends to come from *Christ*, to be taught by the *Apostles*, and by all the *Primitive Writers*. I desire after the Example of other *Great Authors*, that I may first *suppose* some few things, as *Postulata*, and then make *Arguments* and *Inferences* from them, in the manner following.

I. I suppose that the *Epistle to the Romans* (of which the *13th Chapter* is so notable a part) though immediately directed to the Christians of *that Empire*, was yet intended by *St. Paul*, for the Use, Instruction and Direction of *all the Christians* in the World besides.

II. I suppose that, at what time the *13th Chap. to the Romans* might be written, there were as many different Governments in the World, as there are at this Day. I will name but Four. 1<sup>st</sup>, An *Absolute Monarchy*, such as the *Roman Empire* then was, and



and the *Turkish* one now is. Where the *Will* of the Prince was the *Law*. 2dly, A *limited and mixed Monarchy*, as that of the *Quadi* was of old, and *England* is now thought to be. Where the Prince governed by a Body of known Laws, made by himself together with a *Chamber of Nobles*, and a *Chamber of Sage and Substantial Persons*, chose out of the *Commonalty*, to represent them. He could *make no new Law* by himself, nor could he *abrogate an old one*; nor could he so explain a *doubtful* controverted Passage of a Law, as to make it pass for Law, by his *single Authority*. He had the Power of appointing all such as should *execute* the Laws. He had also the Power of the *Sword*; he could make *War and Peace*, but he could not of himself, raise any Money, either to pay the *Civil List*, or to pay the *Soldiers*; nor could he appoint his *Succeſſor*. In a word, it was just such another Government, as that of *England* is, under a *King*, a *House of Lords*, and *Commons*. And if any of you doubt whether the *Quadi* were really and in truth thus governed at that time, I will not refer you to the Writers of those times for my Justification, but desire only to suppose there *might be* such a Government; which is not unreasonable, because you know there actually *is* such a one, namely, our own of *Great Britain*. 3dly, An *Aristocratical* Government, like that of *Venice*, where the *Senators* truly govern all, but with a *Duke* at their Head, of little *Real*, but of much *Ceremonial* Significancy. 4thly, A *Commonwealth* like that of the *Seven Provinces* with a *Stadtholder* for their *Captain General*. These Four Sorts of Government I take leave to suppose there were, or at least *might have been*, when the 13th Chapter to the Romans was written.

III. I suppose the 13th Chapter to the Romans, made no immediate *Change* of all, or any of these Four Governments; but left them as they found them. Each of them continued, or might have continued, as it stood before *that Chapter* was written; neither of them became more or less lawful, innocent, or convenient, than they were before *St. Paul* appeared: It gave the *Governing Part* of each, no *more* Power than it had before; nor did it put the *Governed Party* into any *worse* Estate and Condition.

IV. As the 13th Chapter to the Romans *unsettled* no Government that was then settled; nor made any manner of Change that we know of: So neither did it *settle* or *fix* any Government in such a manner, as to make it unlawful for the *Legislative Power* (should it see fit) to change or alter it. An *Absolute Monarch* might, if he had pleased, have condescended to govern by *known Laws*, and might have obliged himself to govern by *no other* Laws; and might have discharged the People from obeying him, whenever he should go about to overthrow those known Laws: And of this he might appoint twelve or more *Great Officers* to be the *Judges*, who should determine, whether such and such Commands, if executed, would overthrow those known Laws; and consequently whether the People were obliged to execute those Orders and Commands. One may suppose the 13th Chapter to the Romans would not hinder this *Arbitrary Prince*, from making these Condescensions, nor from obliging himself to stand to them when made. Neither would the 13th Chapter to the Romans forbid or hinder a *Limited Monarchy* from becoming an *Absolute* one, should all that are concerned freely consent to make it so. In a word, it is but reasonable to think, that every Estate and Government knows its own Defects the best, and best knows how to supply and remedy those Defects, by changing the *Place* of Power, and putting it into proper Hands, in what Degree or Measure it thinks fit, and most conducive to its own Advantage: For all Governments have the *same Authority*; but differ in the *Exercise* and *Administration* of it.

V. The 13th Chapter to the Romans is therefore a much *quieter* Chapter than most People imagine. It *changed* no Government: It *settled* none unalterably; It made no Freeman *Slaves*; It made no *Slaves Freeman*. It left every Nation to be governed by its own Laws; and if they could *mend* those Laws, they might: And if they should part with them for *worse*, it did not forbid them doing so. It bids every Soul be subject

to



to the higher Powers—but it does not tell us, *who* those Higher Powers are : It sends us to the *Laws* of the *Constitution*, to learn where they are placed. The Higher Powers at Rome were not, at that time, the *Emperor*, the *Senate*, and the *People*, conjunctly, but the *Emperor alone*. The Higher Powers among the *Quadi* were the *Prince*, The *Upper and Lower Chambers* ; in the *Legislature*, the Power of *raising Taxes*, and *appointing the Succession* ; but the *Prince alone* in *Fighting* and *executing Laws*. The Higher Powers in the *Aristocracy*, and in the *Commonwealth*, were much as they now are in *Venice*, and the *Seven Provinces*. This we learn, not from the *13th Chapter to the Romans*, but from the *Histories* of their several *Constitutions*. The *13th Chapter to the Romans* tells us, *that the Powers that be, are ordained of God* ; therefore it tells us, that *Arbitrary Monarchy*, that *Limited Monarchy*, that *Aristocracy*, and a *Commonwealth* are ordained of God ; that they are, each of them, alike *the Ordinance of God*. And the same *Chapter* says, *that they who resist the Ordinance of God, shall receive to themselves Damnation*—Therefore it says, that whosoever resisteth in an *Arbitrary*, or a *Limited Monarchy*, in an *Aristocracy* or in a *Commonwealth*, shall receive to himself *Damnation, i. e.* It says in short, that a *Man* may be a *Rebel* in or against any *Sort*, or *Species* of *Government* ; and that a *Rebel*, without *Repentance*, shall be damned. But does it tell us, what *Rebellion* is ? Or what *Sort* of *Resistance* it is, that makes a *Man* a *Rebel* ? This innocent *Chapter*, to my thinking, says nothing of the *Matter*—it leaves us to learn from the *Laws and Constitutions* of each *Government*, what *Obedience* is required at the *Subjects Hand* : What it is to be a *Rebel* ; and what *Resistance* is adjudged *Rebellion*. And since it leaves each *Kingdom* to be governed by its own *Laws*, (as is above shewn) and to change those *Laws*, as it sees convenient, it follows manifestly, that such, or such an *Act of Resistance*, may be *Rebellion* in *one Country*, and *not* in another ; and (in the same *Country*) at *one time*, and at another time (when the *Law* is changed) it may be *no Rebellion* ; and that which once was *damnable*, may now be *innocent* and *justifiable*. We may therefore learn from the *13th Chapter to the Romans*, that *Rebellion* is at all times *damnable* ; but we cannot learn from thence, what is *Rebellion*. That the *Laws* of the *Land* must teach us : The *Chapter* forbids *Resistance*, but, truly, the *Laws* must tell us what *Resistance* is, and in what *Case* it is forbidden.

VI. The *13th Chapter to the Romans* commands *Submission to the Higher Powers*. The *Laws* of the *Empire* may say, that this *Submission* (with *Respect* to the *Roman Emperor*) must be *Submission without Reserve* : The *Chapter* therefore may say, that the *Submission* of the *Roman Subjects*, was *Submission without Reserve*. But does the *13th Chapter to the Romans* say the same thing to the *Subjects* of the *Quadian Monarchy*, with respect to *their King* ? When the *Laws* of their *Government* tell them, that *their King*, is not a *Roman Emperor*, nor has the sole *Legislative Power* lodged in his *Hands*, nor can raise a *Penny of Money*, without both *Chamber* ; Does this *Chapter* tell the *People*, that they must submit *without Reserve*, to what *Laws* the *Prince* shall think fit to make of his own *Head* ? And must pay whatever *Taxes* shall be laid upon them by *him*, without *Consent* of both *Chambers* ? Does the *Chapter* bind them, where the *Laws* have freed them ? If not, it is manifest, the *Laws of the Land* are to instruct us, what *Submission* is required from the *Subject* to the *Prince*, and in what *Cases* it ought not either to be *asked* or *paid*. The Higher Powers, in the *Aristocracy* of *Venice*, are the *Duke*, and the *Senators* : The *13th Chapter to the Romans* bids the *Subjects* of that *State* submit themselves to the *Duke*, and *Senators*. But does that *Chapter* bid them pay the same *Submission* to the *separate Orders* of the *Duke*, as to the *Decrees* of the *Senators* convened with him in the *Great Council*, if so be that the *Laws* of that *State* forbid the *Subjects* to pay *Obedience* to such *separate Orders* of the *Duke*, unless confirmed by the *Decrees* of the *Senate*, in due *Form* ? Will any *Man* say, the *13th Chap.*  
to



to the Romans commands the Subjects to pay such Acts of Obedience, as the *Laws* of that *State* discharge them from paying, and require them not to pay? The *Duke* is to be obeyed, where the *Laws* say he is to be obeyed, and not otherwise. And if a Man should say, St. *Paul* required the contrary, they would stop his Mouth with St. *Mark*; They would put him into a *Sack*, and throw him into the *Adriatick Gulph*.

VII. It is not therefore to be endured, that the 13th Chapter to the Romans should be so slandered, as it has of late been: Since it only requires such Obedience and Submission, as the *Laws* of every Government require at the Subjects hands, neither *more* nor *less*; for if it required either *more* or *less*, it would alter and unsettle Governments; it would change the *Power* of the *Rulers*, and the *Liberties* of the *People*; it would make the one more or less *absolute*, the other more or less *free*, and quite subvert *Establishments*, and turn the whole World upside downwards: The contrary to all which has been shewn above, and in its way demonstrated.

VIII. I do not therefore intreat you, Not to be Slaves to your selves; nor intreat you not to court Oppression, Tyranny, and Arbitrary Power; nor intreat you, not to abuse your Fellow Subjects for maintaining the Liberties and Privileges which the *Laws* of their Country have allowed them; I do not now so much intreat you in these Matters, as I intreat you, not to abuse the *Word of God*; not to traduce St. *Paul*; not to speak evil of the *Christian Doctrine*; as though these did not only barely favour, but encourage, and command, the Slavery of the Subject, and the Prince's Arbitrary Power, if he should please to assume it. Let the *Scriptures* alone, and make not *them* subservient to the base and villanous Designs of wicked Men that would enthrall their Country. If they in whose hands the *Legislative Power* is lodged, shall now, or hereafter, give up the Liberties and Privileges we now enjoy as *Englishmen*, it will be time enough then to submit to our accursed Fortune. That is a Power, we know not how to disallow, or disobey. There, we shall see and feel the Weight of St. *Paul's* Authority, pressing Submission to the Lawful Powers, and calling for Obedience to the Rulers, that are set over us. Resistance in that Case, shall be accounted damnable. Let the *Laws of our Country* first bind our *Hands*, and then St. *Paul* will bind those *Laws* upon our *Consciences*. But do not wrong that *Saint*, by saying that he hath made us Slaves, before the *Laws of our Country* have made us so. In this, I intreat you to spare the 13th Chapter to the Romans.

IX. But, it may be, you will say, the 13th Chapter to the Romans, presses Submission on the Christians, to a Prince that was the very Worst of Men, a Monster of all Tyranny and Cruelty: And therefore that it is not now perverted or abused, when brought to enforce Submission to the like Commands of other Princes. To this I answer, that it is not to be proved, with any certainty, in whose Reign, or at what time, the *Epistle to the Romans* was written. But let the *Passive Doctors* take it for granted, that it was written when *Nero* reigned; and (if they like it the better for that) just when he caused the City of *Rome* to be set on Fire, and strung his Harp on that Occasion: Or when he gave his Orders out to have his *Mother* killed; or in what Fit of Enormous Wickedness they please to place Him. What, I would know, is all this, to the Other Parts of the World, who were governed by Milder Princes, and lived under *Laws* both Just and Merciful? Where it was not allowed to the Prince to Govern by his own Will and Pleasure, but by known and settled Rules of Wisdom and Equity? Were the Subjects of these *Other States* and Kingdoms obliged, immediately upon the Writing this *Epistle to the Romans*, to conform themselves to the Example of the Subjects of the *Empire*, and pay their Princes the same Obedience and Submission, that were paid to *Nero*? If not, what signifies it who was then Emperor; or whether He were good or bad? And would it not be a sort of Blasphemy against the Christian Doctrine, to say, the Subjects of other States and Kingdoms were *Free* by the *Laws of their Country*,



Country, but, by their *Conversion* to Christianity, became immediately *Slaves* to the Will and Pleasure of their several Princes, in the same Measure and Degree, that the People of *Rome* were *Slaves* to *Nero*? When I intend to Renounce Christianity, I may say this thing of it, but not before. But if these States and Kingdoms were not obliged (by their becoming Christian, and receiving *the Epistle to the Romans* for the Word of God) to conform their several Governments to that of *Rome*, to become themselves *Slaves*, and to make their Princes absolute as *Nero* was; Why then is the 13th Chapter to the *Romans* urged to make those People *Slaves*, after the Example of the *Romans*, whose Government was never like the *Roman Government*? Why may we not as well hold fast our Legal Liberties, after the Example of those *Other Kingdoms*, who continued to be Free, notwithstanding their becoming *Christians*, and receiving the *Epistle to the Romans* for the Inspired Word of God? How should it enter into any serious Man's Belief, that, because the *Romans* were to submit themselves to *Nero*, who was an *Arbitrary Prince*, in Instances of great Tyranny and Cruelty; therefore the *Quadi* must submit themselves to *Cotylas* their Prince, in the like Instances of Tyranny and Cruelty: although by the Laws of that Kingdom, *Cotylas* was not an *Arbitrary Prince*, but bound by his Oath, to Govern by known Laws, which expressly said, *The People were not to be treated in such a manner*? Suppose St. Paul had lived about thirty Years ago, and had taken occasion to write to the *Christians* at *Constantinople*, living under the *Turkish Emperor*; and should have thought fit to have said, in express Words, *Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God; The Powers that be, are ordained of God; and He that resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they who resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation, &c.* Had it been reasonable for any Clergyman to have argued from hence, that the Subjects of *Great Britain*, *Venice*, and *Holland*, must have paid the same Obedience, in all Regards, to the King, the Duke, and Prince of Orange, which the Subjects of the *Turkish Empire* paid to the Grand Seignior? There is hardly a Man living but sees the Absurdity of such a Consequence; and yet, we have Men of all Orders and Degrees amongst us, that do every Day, with great Gravity, make the same Conclusion, from the Subjection of the *Romans* to their Emperor; and infer, that the rest of the World are obliged to pay the same to their Respective Princes; and grow very angry, if we yield not quickly to them. The Supreme Power is, indeed, in all Places, and at all Times, the same, and must have the same Submission paid to it, that is paid to the *Turkish Emperor* now, and was heretofore paid to the *Roman One*. But we must first know certainly where the Supreme Power is lodged; and that, I am sure, we shall never know from the 13th Chapter to the *Romans*, which mentions not a word of *England*, *Venice*, or the *Seven Provinces*. For that I have said, we must have Recourse to the Laws and Constitutions of those several Countries.

X. Let me then intreat you once more, not to lay so heavy a Load upon *this Chapter*, or any other Piece of Scripture. What need is there of charging God with all the Miseries and Misfortunes that afflict Mankind, under a State of Slavery, by making them the Effects of his Commands; which must not be withstood, although the Laws say otherwise, or leave Men, at least, at Liberty? Have Princes any need of being courted to become the Tyrants and Oppressors of their People? Is not the Exorbitance of Power, the Prize they are sometimes aiming at, and contending for, and the thing that seems to please them more, than the true Lustre of the Crown, which they constantly wear with Innocence and Justice? What if it is not so with us at present? Who can answer for Futurity? If a good Prince be complimented with more Power than belongs to him by the Constitution, who shall be able to with-hold it from a Bad One? And if you tell a Good Prince, *He has it from God*, a Bad One will tell himself as much, and become his own Flatterer. Look round the Neighbouring World, and think what *France* is now, what *Spain*, what *Germany*, what *Italy*, what *Swedeland*,



and what *Denmark* is; and remember they were once as *Free* as you are now, and thought themselves as little likely to put on the Chains they now groan under. The *Clergy*, I must own, had but too great a share, in bringing on those bad Changes; there was no doing such great Things without them; they forwarded the cruel and ambitious Aims of *Princes*; the Villanous Designs of Wicked *Counsellors*, and the base Treachery of their *Fellow-Subjects*, and helped to offer up the Liberties of their Country, to the *Will* and *Pleasure* of their Kings. Only, the *13th Chapter to the Romans* had no hand in these bad Businesses; The Explanation of that Chapter to *these Purposes*, is, it should seem, *peculiar to the Church of England*. Excuse me, Brethren, if I am somewhat Zealous to remove this *Scandal*; I ever did, and ever shall account it a Reproach, to have it said, that the *Churchmen* here, are *Enemies of Liberty*, and *Favourers of Arbitrary Power*: and, inconsiderable as I am, I always took the liberty to say, *We* loved our Nation as well as the *Dissenters* did. But yet I cannot help excepting at least a *Dozen* that are not content to be reckoned of the Church, but call themselves the *Church of England*, who by their Principles are Slaves themselves, and (which is worse) would have all others to be so.

XI. I have now done with the *13th Chapter to the Romans*, and have shewed you, that it requires of no People, any more *Submission* to the Higher Powers, than the *Laws of their several Countries* require: That it exacts *no other Obedience* than the *Laws* exact: That it forbids *no other Resistance*, than the *Laws* of that Country forbid: And that it *Damns* no Man, for making such *Resistance* as the *Laws* of his Country allow him to make, be it more or less. And after all this, I have the Presumption to say, that there is not a better Subject in all the *Queen's* Dominions, than I am: I tell my People that She is *the Lord's Anointed*; that She possesses the Throne, as well by *the Act of Settlement*, as by *an Hereditary Right*, as being the Daughter of *King James*; the Title and the Hopes of the *Pretender* (be they what they will) having been extinguished by *an Act of Parliament*; so that no Body can, or ought to come between *the Crown* and *Her*. I shew them moreover, that to preserve the *Protestant Religion* (which would be utterly subverted, should any *Papist* come to Reign over us) an *Act of Parliament* has quite cut off the *Hereditary Right* of more than *Twenty* several People, (all of them *Papists*) to settle the Crown upon *the House of Hanover*, and given to them (as long as they continue *Protestants*) an *Hereditary Right* also. I tell the People also, that Government is *the Ordinance of God*, so beneficial to the World, that, without it, they could not live in Peace, nor have any Property, nor enjoy any good thing of this Life; nor call either House or Land, or Meat or Drink, or Cloathing, *their own*; but that every thing would be taken from them, by such as were cunninger, or stronger than they: And that they cannot love or thank God sufficiently for such a Blessing, as secures all others to them; and this convinces them how reasonable it is, to pay *Taxes* and *Assessments*, to enable the Government to protect them from Violence and Injustice, and Fraud at home, and from their Enemies abroad. I take this Course to make them in Love with Government, which, I assure them, was *ordained of God* purely and only *for the People's Good*; and there is not a Man in the *Parish* but believes it, because it is so much for his Interest; and *it is not truer that God is in Heaven*. I never dress up *Cæsar* like a *Hangman*, a *Ravisher*, and a *Publick Robber*, and then tell them *He is God's Vicegerent*, and is not to be resisted; but I shew them the difference betwixt an *Arbitrary Prince*, and one that governs by *Law*, and tell them how happy the People of *England* are, above what the *Romans* heretofore were, and most other of the Nations of the World now are; whose *Rights and Properties* are as much secured by *Law*, as the *Prerogative* of the Crown is: That they are subject to no *Will* and *Pleasure* of a single Person, but to known Laws made in part, by *Representatives* of their own chusing; and that they are not to pay a *Penny of Money*, but what the *Parliament* lays upon



upon them publickly. This makes them value their *Constitution*, and resolve to maintain it; which I also tell them they are as much obliged to do, as to defend *the Rights and Person* of their *Sovereign*. As to the Doctrines of *Passive-Obedience* and *Non-Resistance*, I seldom meddle with them, because they always suppose some very hard Proceedings of the *Crown*, some notorious Infringement of the *Liberties of the People*, or violent Invasion of their Right and Property; there can be no pretence for *Passive Obedience*, but where the Commands are Unlawful, unreasonably Hard and Cruel, and so insupportable, that they cannot be *actively obeyed*, and complied withal; which is an *Odious Case* to put to the People, against their Prince. And so is the Business of *Non-Resistance*; there is no speaking to it, without supposing things are come to that Extremity, that the Subject cannot have his Remedy, or Security, in *Concealment*, by *Flight*, by *Petition*, nor by *Course of Law*; it necessarily supposes a forcible *Invasion* on the Prince's side, which the Subject is not (it seems) to resist. These I say, are very hard and odious Cases, for Preachers to put against their Princes, though the Conclusion always is in Favour of the Prince. And indeed I have seldom heard these Causes managed in the *Pulpit*, with that Success that should encourage one to do the like. The Prince has generally lost more Ground in the *Affections* of the Audience, than he has gained on their *Reason* and *Understanding*. Nay, where the People have gone away convinced that they must not resist, yet were they full of *Wrath* and *Indignation*, to think they must endure, so tamely, such insupportable Oppressions, as the Preacher had supposed, and, in his Passive Scheme, had laid down. For these and other Reasons I seldom touch upon these Doctrines in the *Pulpit*, and really think I do my Prince more Service by my Silence, than if I should urge them in the common manner. But whenever I am asked my Opinion of these Matters, out of the Church, I never am ashamed to tell them what it is; it is what I have set down at the beginning of this *XIth Section*. I say with King *Charles the First*, that the *Law is the Measure of the King's Power*. And I say with the present Abp. of *Y—*, that the *Law is the Measure of the Subject's Submission*. And I think I may say of my self, from both of them, that *a Subject is not obliged by Law to submit to the Command of his Prince that is directly against the Law*. And this I think will say it self, whether I say it or no. But I add moreover, that in some Cases where the Law leaves me at Liberty (to avoid all Scandal and Offence) I may be obliged to obey a Command that brings not an intolerable Mischief on me: To disobey in *light Cases*, would shew too great a slight of Power, and a disrespect to the Person of the *Governor*, which ought most carefully to be considered, and avoided if it can. In a word, I never preach upon the *13th Chapter to the Romans*, but I endeavour to make the People understand the *Blessing of Government*, to love their Prince, and pay their Taxes readily: By which means I bring them to obey for *Conscience Sake*, much rather than for *Wrath*; because that Government is ordained of God for the good of Mankind, and Princes are appointed of him, to secure this End, and to see it answered by the Execution of good Laws; and for this Cause we pay Tribute. And thus the People see they have a very good Bargain of it—The Prince sells them Security and Protection from all Injustice at Home, and Enemies Abroad, for the Rates and Assessments which they agree (by their Representatives) to pay him at such certain times. But for your Axes, Halters, Fire and Sword, Death and Damnation, if they disobey; they know it as well as I, and pray me to spend my time better. And yet I take my Opportunity to let them know, that Disobedience to the Laws is *Damnable in the other World*, because it is destructive of the Peace and Security of Mankind in this; which is the very End of Government, the very Reason of God's Institution of it.

XII. It is high time you will think to put an end to this Commendation of my own Way of Preaching: I think so too; but I did it, to let you see that there is other use (and much more serviceable to the *Crown*) to be made of the *13th Chapter to the Romans*,



mans, than what is commonly made of it, by most young Preachers, whose Understanding is not, generally, equal to their Heat and Zeal; and who run away with the *Words* and *Letter* of a Text, and leave the *true Sense* and *Meaning* of it behind them. Would it not vex a Man a little; to hear a young Divine preaching upon that Saying of Christ, *Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's*:—To tell his People that from the Division of the Text, it was plain, that whatever was not *God's*, must needs be *Cæsar's*, for no one else was concerned; and then to back it with that pretty Fancy, *Divisum Imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet*. This however had done no great harm, if he had not in the Application told us, that *All Kings* and *Queens* were the same things with *Cæsar*, and invested with the *same Powers*; and consequently that all we had in the World, belonged to *them*, if it were not pre-engaged to *God*. By this we perceived that nothing was left to *us*; the *Tithes* were *God's*, and all the rest was *Cæsar's*. Is this to be endured in an *English* Audience, if the Ears of every Man in the Parish were not bored through? And I would fain learn how much the Doctrine of those *greater Men* differs from that of this Young Curate, who tell us, that all Magistrates, as well the *Subordinate*, as *Supream*, are so of *God*, so much his Ordinance and Institution, that they are not in any *Case*, or upon any *pretence whatever*, to be resisted, not only in the *Execution of the Laws* (which every one allows) but even in the most outrageous *Violation of the Laws*? So that a Petty *Constable* shall break my House open, abuse my Wife and Children, ransack my Coffers, take what Plate, Money, or Goods he pleases, provided his Staff be painted with the *Queen's Arms*; only because these Venerable Gentlemen have stamped the *Divine Authority* upon all *Subordinate Magistrates*. I know they will wipe their Mouths, and say, they have supposed no such *Extream Cases*. I say, we are never the more obliged to them for their Silence; for such *Extream Cases* will suppose themselves, and will come first into every Bodies Mind and Consideration. Say that all *Subordinate Magistrates* are the Ordinance of *God*, and the whole Parish will say *their Constable* is such a Magistrate. Say that Magistrates are by no means to be resisted, though doing never such violent illegal Acts, and what shall hinder a needy Rascal got into an Office, from attempting to do them, protected for the present, not only with the *Royal* but *Divine Authority*? And all these Doctrines, and their dreadful Consequences are, it seems, to keep the People from *Rebellion*! As if it were *Rebellion* to oppose illegal Violences! As if it were a *damnable Sin* to resist a *Constable*, or (if you will) a *Justice of Peace*, committing Outrages *against the Laws*, such as deserve Imprisonment, Fine, or Death! Yet these are the easie, natural, and unavoidable Consequences of the Doctrine of these *worthy Writers*, who seem to have little Regard to the *Country* wherein they live, and little to the *Laws* that protect them from those Insults and Violences, which they invite and tempt Men to commit, by making their Persons  *sacred*; for by this new Divinity, we are about to consecrate Four or Five Thousand of the *Queen's Officers* at Home, and all the *Regiments* in *English Pay* abroad. Let these Learned Men look to it, for there is not one of the *Foot-guards*, but, if sent by his *Officer* (whose Commission runs still higher and higher) is a *Subordinate Magistrate*, and is upon that Account *irresistible*. You may be sure I say these things with great Scorn; but yet these silly wicked Consequences are not to be avoided, if you will take *these Doctors* Word for the Premises. How freely do they part with Peoples Estates and Liberties! How cheap do they make *Damnation*! *To be damned*, will, in a little time, come to signify no more than to be *excommunicated* in a *Spiritual Court*, for not appearing upon Summons, or for not paying Costs of Three or Four *Shillings*! Surely, my Brethren will awake some time or other from these Dreams; although I know *my Voice* is much too low to reach them.

But Courage, *Countrymen*! For whilst I was writing, under great Agony of Mind, the last Period, I received in the *Gazette*, the *Address* of the *Clergy of London and Westminster*, with their *Bishop* at their Head: Who tell the *Queen*, "They acknowledge



“ ledge the most illustrious House of *Hanover*, as the next Heirs in the Protestant  
 “ Line, to have the only Right of ascending the Throne, and indisputable Title to our  
 “ Allegiance. We thank God (continue they) from the bottom of our Hearts, for the  
 “ Legal Provisions in this Regard made to secure us from Popery and Arbitrary Power ;  
 “ which we once, through the Divine Assistance, vigorously and successfully withstood,  
 “ when they were breaking in upon our Constitution : Nor shall we fail to manifest an  
 “ equal Zeal against them, whenever, and by what Means soever, they shall meditate  
 “ a Return.” From whence I do with great Satisfaction observe, 1. That the *Bishop*  
 and the *Clergy of London and Westminster* do openly acknowledge, to the *Queen's*  
 Face, that an *Act of Parliament* can transfer the *Hereditary Right* of Succession from  
 one *Person* to another, and from one *House* to another, and that such a Title is *indis-*  
*putable*. The Proof of this, is, that the *House of Savoy*, and other *Houses*, are set aside,  
 in favour of the *House of Hanover*. This I am sure, the *Clergy of London* were far  
 enough from venturing to say, when the *Bill of Exclusion* was on foot ; then the Right  
 of Succession was *De Jure Divino*, *indefeasible*, *unalienable*, *unalterable*, and I know  
 not what. They did not pretend it to be barely *unreasonable*, and *hard*, and *inconve-*  
*nient*, but absolutely *unlawful* to exclude the *Duke of York*. They altered their Mind,  
 belike, when he was King *James*. 2dly, They thank God heartily, for the *Legal Pro-*  
*visions* made to secure the People from *Popery* and *Arbitrary Power*. And so do I, to  
 see this *Declaration* come from them, because it will help to acquit them of the Scan-  
 dal of being *Friends to Arbitrary Power* ; and because I hope they mean what they  
 say. Now I would fain know how any Men can *thank God*, that the Laws are on their  
 Side, in this or that Regard, who acknowledge at the same time, that if those Laws  
 should be invaded, violated, and quite subverted, even to the utter Misery and total Ruin  
 of the People, they have no manner of Right to defend them, by any *forcible* Opposition  
 whatsoever, although the Person that thus subverts those Laws, has no such Power com-  
 mitted to him ? What Security to a Subject is a *Law* against *Arbitrary Power*, when it  
 is forbidden the Subject (by a *Superior Law*) to put that Law in Execution against that  
*Arbitrary Power* ? What are *Privileges* worth, what are *Liberties* good for, that can-  
 not be maintained and secured, by such means as are only proper, only able to secure  
 them and maintain them ? How would it read, should such a Speech have been left as  
 this, spoken to the *King of the Quadi*, by the *High-Priest of Mars*, at the Head of his  
*Sodality* ? “ We thank the Immortal Gods, *most Noble Prince*, that we have *Laws*  
 “ and *Statutes* to secure us against *Arbitrary Power*, that bind you, by the Share you  
 “ had in making them, and by the Oath you took to govern by them, neither to hurt  
 “ our *Persons*, nor deprive us of our *Liberty*, nor take our *Money* from us, but in such  
 “ a manner and proportion as is settled by our *Constitution* ; these Laws and Liberties,  
 “ the World around, admire and envy to us. But yet we are obliged to tell your *Sub-*  
 “ *jects*, (as we often tell your *Majesty*) that whenever you please to break through these  
 “ Restraints, to invade these Liberties, and to subvert these *Laws*, their Hands are  
 “ tied, they have no other Remedy, but to implore your *Mercy* and Forbearance, and  
 “ beseech the *Heavenly Powers* to divert your Purpose, and inspire you with a better  
 “ Mind. We tell your *Majesty*, you have no *Moral* Power, nor yet *Political*, to  
 “ do these cruel and destructive Things ; but if you will go on, the *Gods* may call you  
 “ to an Account hereafter : But as for *us*, and all your People, we are devoted to eter-  
 “ nal *Snakes and Furies*, if we lift up a Hand against you ; for you are *irresistible*, not  
 “ only in your Sacred *Person*, but in all your *Ministers* that act *subordinately* under you.”  
 I stay not to conjecture what Remarks so grave a Man as *Tacitus* would make on such  
 a Speech. I only say, That if the Prince abstain from Violence, after this, he is a  
 very good Prince, and will deserve all Thanks and Praise imaginable ; but what Claim  
 or Title to such solemn Thanks, the *Immortal Gods* should have, passes my Reach and



Understanding ; because (as I should think) those Gods were the very People (if you will pardon that bold Figure) that hindered these good Laws from being any Security to the Subject, by imposing an after-Law, that tied his Hands from maintaining them. And if the *London Addressers*, when they come to explain themselves, should mean thus, I say, they cannot compliment their Prince too highly, for the Preservation of these Laws from Violence ; but I shall be to seek, for what it is, they *thank God* so from the bottom of their Hearts. For a Hundred Laws are not worth a Chip, if he, *against whom* those Laws are expressly designed, has it in his Power to subvert and confound them when he will ; because those Persons, *for whose Safety* those Laws were expressly designed, are restrained from opposing him with any forcible Resistance whatsoever. Had this Doctrine been true, and believed, how little had all the Laws against *Popery* signified in the Reign of King *James*, had the *Subordinate Powers* at *Hounslow-Heath* stood by their *Master*, and joined with him in the *Executive Part* ? 3dly, I am glad to observe, that the *Bishop* and *Clergy* take occasion to represent to her Majesty, and all the World, how vigorously they *have* opposed *Popery* and *Arbitrary Power*, and how vigorously they will *again* oppose them, if ever they offer to return and make head. How vigorously and successfully they opposed *Popery*, is visible and legible to all the World, to their everlasting Honour. But their vigorous Opposition to *Arbitrary Power*, in that unhappy Reign, has the Misfortune not to be so well known to the Kingdom, unless they mean the Hand they had in bringing about the *Revolution*. The *Noble Head* of these *Addressers* had indeed such a Share in that Transaction, that it never ought to be forgotten ; and *he* opposed Illegal Arbitrary Power, *by all the ways* a brave Man, and a Lover of his Country could ; but surely the *Followers* of him will not assume this Honour. Let them make out their Claim to this great Merit, and all Men living will be glad to own it. But till it appear, that they *did* heretofore vigorously oppose Arbitrary Power in their Prince, the Promise of doing the like, with equal Zeal *hereafter*, will and must be *fallacious*, or of little Use and Service ; unless it be, to let us see, that they, who say they have opposed Arbitrary Power, and say they will *again* oppose it, must needs believe it *Lawful* for other People to do the like. But if they only mean (as I am afraid they do) by *Opposition*, the Preaching up *the Prince's Obligations* to keep his Oath, and not to exercise any Illegal Arbitrary Power ; what will it signify, if, at the same time they tell their Audience, that *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* have tied their Hands, made all Laws *useless*, and all Nations *defenceless*, in Case the Prince will not regard his Oaths and Obligations, but will subvert the Laws, invade the People's Rights, Estates and Lives, and in a word, undo the Kingdom ? Let them but say this plain thing—That *it is not forbidden to this Nation, by any Law or Command of God, to save it self and its Posterity, from imminent and utter Ruin by Resistance*, and we will ask no more. And if it still be asked, who shall be Judges when this Ruin is so near, that it will want *Resistance* to prevent it ? I answer, *every Lord, and every Commoner in Great Britain*.

But after all, I am come back to say, that whenever the *Legislative Power* shall enact, that the *Prince's Proclamations* shall be accounted Sacred as the *Roman Edicts* were : That they shall do just what they *please*, and what they please shall be accounted *Legal* : That to resist *them*, or those whom they shall *Commission* under *Hand and Seal*, though violating the known Laws, shall be *Rebellion* : Whenever this or more shall be done by the Legislature, I freely own *I shall be bound by it* ; and own moreover, that *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* will bind me to it. For that is the meaning of all I have been saying, That *the Word of God* obliges all Subjects to *such Obedience*, and *no other*, as the *Laws* of their Country have obliged them to : And has forbidden *such Resistance*, and *no other*, as the *Laws* of their Country have forbidden.



A

## S E R M O N

Preached before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, at the Parish-Church of St. Mary-le-Bow on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 17<sup>10</sup>/<sub>11</sub>. Being the Day of their Anniversary Meeting.

A C T S XXVI. Ver. 18.

*To open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darknefs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance among them which are sanctified by Faith that is in me.*

**S**T. Paul is in this Chapter, giving an Account of his Conversion, to King Agrippa, Festus, and a numerous Audience of Attendants, Jews and Romans; and amongst other things he tells them, that Jesus Christ, who appeared to him, told him he would deliver him from the People, *i. e.* the Jews, and from the Gentiles, to whom he was now sending him. The Errand he now sent him on, was this, expressed in the Words of the Text; *to open, &c.* In which Words we have, *First*, a Description of the State the Gentile World was then in; their Eyes were shut, they lived in Darknefs, and under the Power of Satan. *Secondly*, The change that Christianity was to make in them; it was *to open their Eyes, to turn them from Darknefs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.* *Thirdly*, The end of this Conversion, that by Faith in Christ they might receive forgiveness of their Sins here, and an Inheritance hereafter in Heaven among the Saints, or them which are Sanctified.

*First*, Here is a Description of the State and Condition the Gentile World was then in, expressed by Blindnefs and Darknefs, as the most comfortless, so the most hazardous Estate of Life; and by being under the Power and Dominion of Satan, the declared Enemy of God and Man; the great Usurper of God's Honour, and a great Tyrant over all his Vassals. These Expressions are all of them Figurative, and put to shew how deplorably sunk the World was, in Worship and in Practice; plunged into all Idolatry, and into all sort of Wickedness, into which they fell, being blinded in their Understanding. Their Idols (saith the Psalmist, 135.) are Silver and Gold, the Work of Men's Hands; they have Eyes, and see not; Ears, and hear not; Noses have they, and smell not: They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their Trust in them. The Man who discerns not the Vanity of Idols, is as blind, with respect to Reason, which is the Eye of the Soul, as the Idol it self is, which seeth not, though it look as if it could. And as for Sin, it is every where represented as a State of Blindnefs, and all its Works are accounted Works of Darknefs, as well because Men cannot fall into them, before they have extinguished the Light that God hath placed in them to guide and direct their Steps; as also because they are generally ashamed of them,



and seek Concealment and Obscurity ; and because they lead to Misery and Punishment, which the Scriptures call a place of *outer Darknefs*.

*The Power of Satan* implies, 1. The *Idolatry* in which the World was then, and long before held ; all Worship besides that of the true God, terminating in Him, who is therefore called *the God of this World*. 2. The Power and Possession he had in, and over Mens Bodies, to afflict and torment them with Diseases and strange Sufferings ; which God for some secret Purposes, but especially for the greater Manifestation of the Power and Glory of His Son *Jesus Christ*, permitted those bad Spirits to exercise in greater Degree and Measure, *about*, and *at* the time of *Christ's* appearing in the Flesh, and for about Two Hundred Years *after*, than ever He did before or since. And 3. it implies (and that most commonly in Scripture) *the Power and Dominion of Sin* ; *Satan* being in some sort the proper Author of Sin, the first Sinner himself, and the first Seducer of his Fellow-Angels ; the first tempter of Mankind to Sin, the great encourager of it ever since, and the designed Executioner of God's Vengeance on it in the World of Misery to come. For these Reasons, all Sin is in a manner referred to *Him*, as to its *first Principle* ; and all Sinners are called *his Children*, *his Subjects*, and *his Servants* : Not that he is indeed a *Father*, a *Prince*, and *Master* of the World, (as some too easily conclude from these and such Expressions) but because they *do his Works*, they follow *his Example*, and *imitate* this apostate Spirit, in his Wickedness and Disobedience ; and are therefore said to be *under his Power and Dominion* as well when they follow the wicked Devices of their *own Hearts*, as when they are actually led by *his Suggestions*, and truly tempted by *him*.

From this Ignorance of the true God, from this Blindness of their Understanding, from these Works of Darknefs, and from this Power of Satan ; the *Apostles*, as the Ministers of *Christ*, were to deliver the *Gentile World* : Which was the *Second* thing I was to speak to ; for so saith *Christ* himself : *I send thee to open their Eyes, to turn them from Darknefs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*, i. e. Christianity was to overthrow Idolatry, root out the Worship of many Gods, and to reform the wicked World in all Instances : It was first to introduce the Worship of one, and the true God into the World, and then to conform the Reason and Manners of it, to his Will, to engage Men to live with one another, like Children of the same common Father, and Subjects of the same Prince, and Servants of the same Master. These were the two great things that Christianity was to do, to convince the World that there was but one God, and that the way to please Him, was to live well with one another, to do Justice, shew Mercy, live Virtuously, and discharge Honestly the Duties of our natural, and our civil Relation.

Our *Saviour* preaching to, and living with the *Jews*, who were now free from all Idolatry, does not often take notice of this great End of his coming, to let them know there was but one God : But the *Apostles*, who were to go into the *Gentile World*, are full of this Doctrine, and always insist upon this Article. They must indeed, as they did evermore, begin with it ; for *Christianity* supposes it, and without that Bottom cannot stand. Revealed Religion pretends to be the Will of God declared to Mankind ; but if there be more Gods than One, then there may be more Revelations, and contrary to this that is now brought : And a Man may be as much obliged to receive them, as this, and that in the end comes to nothing ; for contrary Obligations, if equal, void each other, and leave Men at their Liberty. One may see, by all the Writings of the *Apostles*, and by all the *Apologies* of Old, in Behalf of Christians, and their Faith, that nothing was to be done with the *Gentiles*, till they believed there was but *One God*. This also made good Way for the Reception of that pure Morality, that *Christ* commanded to be taught : for, as the idolatrous Worship of the *Gentiles* was generally accompanied



accompanied with Rites, either *cruel* or *obscene*; so the returning to the Worship of the true God, abolished naturally those bad Customs. And as Men think they ought to endeavour to resemble, as well as they can, the God they worship; so by having God represented to them, just and true, holy, merciful, and good, they would naturally conform their Manners to those Notions. Which is one Reason why the *Christian* Morality exceeds all others; because the *Christian* Revelation discovers a more excellent and perfect supream Being, than any other Institution or Religion.

These Discoveries of the true God, who is so holy, just, and pure a Being, and of the way of worshipping Him acceptably, by addressing to Him in, and through the Mediation of his *Blessed Son*, together with the absolute Necessity of leaving all our Sins, and of endeavouring to be holy, just, and true, and merciful our selves, as he enables us to be:—These Things, I say, are implied in *Opening the Eyes of the Gentiles, and turning them from Darknes to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.*

To live in *Ignorance* and *Error* is no uneasy State, because no Condition of the Mind is any farther Evil than it is apprehended so; and whilst Men are ignorant of the Truth, they feel no real want of it: nor can they well desire it, whilst they do not know they have it not. But to live under the *Power of Satan*, i. e. under the *Dominion of Sin*, is really grievous and uneasy, a Thing that reasonable Men do truly suffer under, and complain of. They find themselves vexed and disquieted with their own Passions, and are neither at Rest under the Importunity of many of their Desires, nor yet with their Indulgence and Satisfaction: They feel a Sort of War within themselves, betwixt their Appetites, which are tumultuous and disorderly, and their Reason, which would fain restrain them; And although they know not naturally how to deny themselves, yet they are secretly convinced they *should and ought*, are pleased when they *can and do*, and grieved and ashamed of their Weakness when they *yield*. Thus far the Reason and natural Conscience of some Men have carried them, without the Aid of Revelation: And therefore wise and reasonable Men would be glad to be delivered from this Bondage they are under, to their own corrupt Affections, considering them as *troublesome*, though not *sinful*; and to be redeemed to such a noble Liberty, as Reason tells them they might and should enjoy. But when, moreover, they consider, that their disorderly Affections do not only shew them to be *weak* and *imperfect* Creatures, but by yielding to them, make them *false, unjust, cruel, impure, and mischievous*, and consequently odious in the Sight of God, and obnoxious to his Anger, and what Vengeance may be justly due to those Offences—When they consider this, they find their Sins not only *burthensome*, but *hazardous*, and such as give them *Fear*, as well as *Trouble*.

From this Fear and from this Hazard, *Christ's* Religion only can deliver Men; that is the End of their Conversion, *that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins*, which is the *Third Thing* to be spoken to.

By *Forgiveness of Sins*, is properly meant the Remission of that Punishment that is due to Sin; for, if Sin were not punishable, it were not to be forgiven: And look what Apprehension People have of their Danger; just so they value their Deliverance and Escape: And therefore forgiveness of Sins, is a Matter of infinitely greater Consequence with *Christians*, than it could be with the *Gentiles*, or seems to have been with the common *Jews*; because the *Christian* Revelation opens a much sadder Scene of Misery to wicked and impenitent People, than common Reason could discover to the *Gentiles*, or the *Law and Prophets* did to the *Jews*, at least with any clearness: *The Wrath of God is now Revealed against all Unrighteousness*, and the Effect of it, is endless Punishment, in Pains most exquisite: Deliverance from which, is now included in the *Forgiveness of Sins*: And so St. Paul saith, 1 Thes. i. 10. That *Jesus delivereth us from the Wrath to come*. And Heb. ii. 14. *From him who hath the Power of Death,*



i. e. *the Devil*. There is no way of discovering the Mercy and Goodness of God, in sending His Son to die for the forgiveness of Sins, like shewing the astonishing Danger to which those Sins had certainly exposed us; and whoever will truly understand, in order truly to value *Christ's Redemption*, must first consider the *Captivity* in which He lay, the *Chains* He was laden with, the *Darkness* in which He sat, and the *Punishment* to which He was reserved. Consider what that Saviour and Redeemer saith himself, Matt. xxv. 41. *Depart from Me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*: And ver. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal*. Consider what St. Paul says, 2 Thes. i. 7. *When the Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction*. Let us find as many *Figures* as we will, in these and such like Passages, the *Truth* must needs be, that the Punishment assigned to wicked and impenitent People, in the other World, would certainly be great and endless; which shews us also what the Mercy is, of having our Sins forgiven; and what a mighty Saviour and Deliverer *Christ* was, who was, as the Angel said, *to save us from our Sins*.

But the Goodness of God is like Himself, Infinite. He does not only save us from our Sins, but *crowneth us with Mercy and Loving Kindness*. The Design of sending *Christ* into the World to live and die for us, was not only that we might thereby receive the forgiveness of Sins, but also an *Inheritance among the Saints*, or them which are Sanctified: *Whom He will justify, them He will also Glorify*. It is with Men, we see, one thing to *Pardon*, and another to *Reward*; but with God it is the same; they whose Sins shall be forgiven, shall also be Inheritors of everlasting Happiness. The Reason of that is, that the Purpose of God was, that Man continuing Innocent and in Obedience, was to be for ever Happy, and nothing but Sin could possibly defeat this gracious Purpose, and put him under God's Displeasure; but Sin intervening did it; the Mischief therefore had been endless and irreparable, had not God in his boundless Mercy, sent his Son to die for the Forgiveness of our Sins: So saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 20. *For he hath made Him to be Sin for us*, (i. e. He dealt with Him, as if He had been a Sinner) *who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in Him*. The only thing therefore that cast Man out of God's Favour, being thus removed and taken away, He became Reconciled to God, received again into His Favour, and returned, as it were, to his former State of Happiness. These means of Grace brought back with them, the hopes of Glory which were lost by Sin.

I have not, I see, been able, within the Compass I have taken, to speak to the Words of *the Text*, with near that Clearness and that Fulness which they very well deserve. I chose them upon THIS OCCASION, because they contain in them, the short, but very lively Description, as well of the sad Estate and Condition of the *Gentiles*, with respect to the Worship of the true God, the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, their Vassalage to *Satan*, and their Slavery under *Sin*; as also of the Remedies that God in his boundless Goodness hath provided for these Evils, *Faith* in his Son, *Repentance* of their Sins, and *Obedience* to His Laws; together with the inestimable Favours, Privileges, and Mercies that attend the Conversion of them to Christianity, *forgiveness of Sins*, and an *Inheritance among the Saints*, in everlasting Happiness.

For these Reasons it was, that I chose these Words to speak to; and because the Application of them to our *present Meeting* is so easie and so proper. For if the end of my appearing here be (as I think it is) to excite the *Zeal* of every one that hears me, to contribute all that in them lies to the Advancement of the Kingdom of *Christ*, the *Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*: What single Motive can I name, what Argument or Reason can I bring to effect this End, that is not properly reducible to some



some of these forementioned Heads? The World with which we are concerned, still sits in *Darkness and the shadow of Death*: The People as *ignorant, as vicious, and idolatrous* as then. The Gospel brings as *glad Tidings of Peace and Salvation* to These, as Those: Their Wants are much the same, so are the Remedies. And if the *Mission* be not now so *Personal* and immediate, as *St. Paul's* in this Case was, from *Christ* himself; yet I am sure the *Mission* is so *general*, and the *Command* so binding, that I believe it would be hard for any single Christian in the World, to find himself exempted from complying with it, according to the measure and degree of his Abilities and Opportunities. Go, saith our Lord, and make *Disciples in all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you; And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World.* The Work is to last as long as there is Occasion; and though it be put into the Hands of his Apostles, and all that shall succeed them to the World's End, in all the necessary Parts of their Ministration, and such as are peculiar to their Office; yet does the Reason of the Command oblige all other Christians to be as Serviceable, Useful, and Instrumental to the fulfilling it, as they are able. No Christian is exempted from contributing to the best of his Power, to the spreading and enlarging the Kingdom of Christ, *the giving Him the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for His Possession*: Not that every Christian or every Church-Man is hereby obliged to leave his Country to convert the Infidels, but that such be sent, to whom such Work is proper, and encouraged and assisted in their Undertakings, with all the Advantages and Powers, that Governments are able to afford them; and that all private Christians forward and assist them by all the Means and Methods they are masters of, doing whatever in them lies towards a Work of such unspeakable Compassion and true Charity.

Now taking this for granted, that all Christians, both by the Nature and Reason of the Thing, as well as *Christ's Command*, stand obliged to contribute to the bringing the whole World to the Knowledge and Faith of *Christ*, as they have Opportunity and Abilities of doing it——Taking this for granted, it will be very hard to find Excuses for those *Christian Governments*, or those private *Christians*, who are not content barely to pass by, and neglect the Opportunities of bringing many thousand Souls to *Christ*, who died to save them all; but who really discourage such as, animated with true and godly Zeal, would undertake that godly Work.

That I may not lose my self in Generals, nor be encumbered with too many Particulars, I will at this time, with your Patience, consider only the Case of such, as will not permit their Slaves to be instructed in the Faith of *Christ*, and brought to Baptism: A thing so common in all our *Plantations* abroad, that I have reason to doubt, whether there be any Exception of any People of ours, who cause their Slaves to be Baptized. What do these People think of *Christ*? What of their *Slaves*? What of themselves? What do they think of *Christ*? That He who came from Heaven, to purchase to Himself a Church, with his own precious Blood, should sit contented, and behold with unconcern, those who profess themselves his Servants, excluding from its Gates those who would gladly enter if they might, and exercising no less Cruelty to their Souls (as far as they are able) than to their Bodies? One may ask with Indignation indeed, what such People think of *Christ*? But it is more proper to say, they think not at all of Him: For if they would consider him in any Quality or Capacity whatever, as *Saviour, Law-giver, Head of His Church, or Judge*, they would no more venture to lay an Impediment in any one's way to Conversion, than they would throw themselves into the Fire deliberately. It would be as hard for them, to give an Account of what they think of those unhappy *Creatures*, whom they use thus cruelly: They see them equally the Workmanship of God, with themselves; endued with the same Faculties, and intellectual



tellectual Powers ; Bodies of the same Flesh and Blood, and Souls as certainly immortal : These People were made to be as Happy as themselves, and are as capable of being so ; and however hard their Condition be in this World, with respect to their Captivity and Subjection, they were to be as Just and Honest, as Chaste and Virtuous, as Godly and Religious as themselves : They were bought with the same Price, purchased with the same Blood of *Christ*, their common Saviour and Redeemer ; and in order to all this, they were to have the Means of Salvation put into their Hands, they were to be instructed in the Faith of *Christ*, to have the Terms and Conditions fairly offered and proposed to them. Let any of these cruel Masters tell us, what part of all these Blessings were not intended for their unhappy Slaves by God, purchased for them by the Blood of *Christ*, and which they are not equally capable of enjoying with themselves ? What Account then will these Masters give of *themselves*, who were the Occasion and the Instruments of bringing these unhappy People, from a Country where the *Name of Christ* is never heard, or called upon, into a Country where *Christians* govern all, and *Christ* is called their *Lord and Master*, and yet will not permit these Slaves to be Instructed, and become the Servants of this heavenly *Master* ? Who bring them, as it were, into Sight of *the Waters of Life*, and then withhold them from receiving any Benefit from them ! They hope, it is likely, *God* will be Merciful to these unhappy Creatures, though *they* themselves will not be so : Their Hope is good ; but they have Reason to fear *God* may deny that Mercy to themselves, which they deny to others : And no Man living can assign a better and more justifiable Cause, for *God's* withholding Mercy from a *Christian*, than that *Christian's* withholding the Mercy of *Christianity* from an *Unbeliever*. If these Men ever read the Scriptures, and meet with such a Question as this—*Lord, are there few that be Saved ?* What a strange puzzle must they be at to make an Answer ? I for my own particular part hinder, as much as possibly I can, some Fifty or an Hundred, it may be many more, from being Saved. I can be certain only of the Salvation of *Christians*, and therefore am my self a *Christian* : I know it is impossible for any one to become a *Christian*, without being instructed in the Knowledge of *Christ*, and being afterwards *baptized* with Water, in the manner and form prescribed by *Christ* himself ; and I know I hinder all these People that are under me, from being Instructed and Baptized ; go on—Therefore I know I hinder them, as much as in me lies, from being *Saved*. I dare not for all the World renounce to my own Baptism : I would not venture my own Salvation on *God's* unpromised, unrevealed Mercy, without the being made a *Christian*, as I should ; but yet I have nothing to depend upon, but that unpromised Mercy for these poor Creatures ; and now, it is in my Power to seal that Mercy to them certainly, by Means and Instruments of *God's* own Appointment, and yet I refuse to do it. The Scriptures will read strangely with such Practices as these ; and a *Christian* hindring others from becoming *Christians*, must needs be a strange Creature, even to himself, when he considers.

To these and other heavy Objections that lye to this inhumane Practice, there are but two or three poor Pretences that must answer, which I will now consider in a few Words. The *First* is, that were their Slaves *Christians*, they would immediately, upon their Baptism, become *Free*. The *Second* is, that were their Slaves *Christians*, and still to continue Slaves, yet they should be obliged to treat them with more Humanity and Mercy, than the nature and necessity of their Service would admit of, to make their Masters Gainers. And the *Third* is much of the same kind, that were their Slaves *Christians*, they could not sell them, it being Unlawful, they say, *to sell Christians*.

To the *First* of these Pretences, namely—That should they suffer their Slaves to be Baptized, they would immediately become *Free*—We may Answer, that were this true, the Mischief of it would be no greater in our *Plantations* abroad, than it is at home, where there is no such thing as *Slavery*, but all our Work is done by hired  
 Servants ;



Servants; for good Wages and good Usage will always invite Servants, even to the hardest Labours: And if this would not turn to a good Account, it were better the World should pay much dearer for the Pleasures and Conveniencies those Places afford, than purchase them so cheaply at the expence of so much Misery, such Cruelty and hard Treatment of Men, as good as our selves, and at the hazard of their Souls. But allowing this would be some Inconvenience to the Civil Government, with respect to Trade, is there any Question, whether the Blessing of God upon their Piety and good Designs in furtherance of his Glory, in the Salvation of Mens Souls, would make an ample Compensation for all the Inconveniencies and Loss it might sustain, by making their Slaves, or letting them be made *Christians*? But after all, what considering Man would run the hazard of being under God's Displeasure, by hindring others from becoming *Christians*, for all the Profit, Honour, and Advantage in the World? But *Secondly*, there is no fear of losing the Service and Profit of their Slaves, by letting them become *Christians*: Their Avarice and Cruelty are grounded on a certain Mistake: They are neither prohibited by the Laws of God, nor those of the *Land*, from keeping *Christian Slaves*; their Slaves are no more at Liberty after they are Baptized, than they were before. There were People in St. Paul's time, that imagined they were freed from all former Engagements, by becoming *Christians*; but St. Paul tells them, this was not the meaning of *Christian Liberty*; the Liberty wherewith *Christ* had made them Free, was Freedom from their Sins, Freedom from the Fears of Death, and everlasting Misery, and not from any State of Life, in which they had either voluntarily engaged themselves, or were fallen into through their Misfortune. *Let every Man* (says He, 1 Cor. vii. 20.) *abide in the same Calling, wherein he was called.* Let every Man know, that his being called to the Faith of *Christ*, does not exempt him from continuing in the same State of Life he was before; it makes no alteration of his Condition in this World; the Liberty of Christianity is entirely Spiritual. *Art thou called, being a Servant? care not for it; but if thou mayst be made free, use it rather.* Art thou Baptized and made a Christian, being a Slave? mind it not; be not much concerned at it; but if thou canst obtain thy Liberty, by fair and honest Means, *use it rather*, take the Opportunity: If Liberty comes legally, or by the Favour of thy Patron, accept of it by all Means; thou mayst thereby be better enabled to serve God, when thou art at thine own Disposal. *Brethren, let every one wherein he is called, therein abide with God.* In a Word, the *Law of Christ* made no changes of this Nature, but left Men under all the Obligations and Engagements that it found them, with respect to *Liberty* or *Bondage*: Nor do the *Laws of the Land* hinder People from being Slaves when they become *Christians*. Christianity has so long prevailed in these Parts of the World, that there are no Advantages or Privileges now peculiar to it, to distinguish it from any other Sect or Party; and therefore whatever Liberties the Laws indulge to us, they do it to us as *English-Men*, and not as *Christians*. If therefore it be lawful in our Country, to have or keep any Slaves at all, it is equally lawful to have or keep them so, though they are *Christians*: The Laws do not distinctly favour *Christianity* in this Point: And if they should see fit to do it here *at home*, where there is no Occasion for such Slaves, what need were there yet of doing it *abroad*, where there is great Occasion for them? And supposing *Christianity* did (by the favour of Laws, and by the Indulgence of Princes) immediately emancipate and free all Slaves receiving Baptism, yet since it would be so much, either to the Dishonour of God, the Prejudice of *Christ's* Religion, or to the prejudice of Trade and Civil Government at home; who could despair of obtaining Laws, to reconcile these Interests, in an Age so free and fruitful of Laws as ours is? I would not have any one's Zeal for Religion (much less my own) so far outrun their Judgment in these matters, as to cause them to forget that we are a People who live and maintain ourselves by *Trade*; and that if *Trade* be lost, or over-



much discouraged, we are a ruined Nation ; and shall our selves in time become as very *Slaves*, as those I am speaking of, though in another kind : I would not therefore be understood, in what I have already said, or in what I am to say farther, to plead for any other Liberties or Privileges, than what are reconcileable with Trade, and the Nation's Interest, though a little perhaps abated.

But this, I say, is a Mistake common to Masters and to Servants, and occasions the latter to seek for Baptism purely for the sake of Liberty, without Regard to the true unspeakable Advantages of Christianity ; and occasions the former to hinder them, by all Means, from being Baptized, for fear of losing their Service ; and with as little regard to the Spiritual Privileges, which they thereby withhold from those unhappy People : Whereas if both were undeceived, the Masters would be no losers, and the Servants the greatest gainers in the World.

The *Second* Pretence is this, That should their Slaves continue Slaves after their Baptism, yet they should be obliged to use them with *less Rigour*, than the nature and necessity of their Service will admit, if their Masters must be Gainers by them. This indeed is somewhat for the Honour of *Christ's Religion*, that it commands the Exercise of all Compassion, Kindness, and good Nature towards *Christians* ; but this, I think, is common to most Religions with it, which equally favour their particular Professors ; and *Christianity* distinguishes it self from them, by commanding Mercy and Compassion to be shewn to *all the World* alike, without respect to Sect or Party, unless where there is an unavoidable Occasion of Preference. We are commanded to follow His Example, *who is rich in Mercy towards all*, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, *Bond* or *Free*. Should some Necessity compel us to deal hardly with either *Jew* or *Christian* ; our Love to *Christ*, and Honour to *His Name*, would soon determine where the Hardship were to fall ; but where there is no occasion for any Preference, the *Christian* Religion does as strongly and certainly oblige to shew Mercy and Compassion to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as to *Christians*. The Commands of *Christ* do certainly bind us to pity all Mankind, to do to all Men, indistinctly, all the good we can, and not to *Christians* only ; for that would be to fall into the Partiality of the *Jews*, who would only shew Kindness to *Jews*, which *Christ* himself reproves, and condemns as a straitness and narrowness of Mind, and falling very short of His extensive Charity : So that to deal more rigorously with an *Infidel* than with a *Christian*, is to compliment our Saviour with Disobedience ; to do some Honour to His *Name*, which He would have us pay to His *Nature*, in shewing Kindness to our Fellow-Creatures : It is therefore a great Mistake at the bottom, to think themselves at Liberty, to treat a *Savage*, and an *Infidel*, with Inhumanity and Rigour ; but it is a strangely cruel and most wicked Absurdity that is built on this Mistake : I may not use a *Christian* Unmercifully, therefore I will not let this *Savage* be a *Christian*, for fear I may not use him afterwards unmercifully. What a Mockery would it be, to pretend that I cannot relieve a Man, because he is not qualified for my Charity, when I know at the same time, that I hinder him from being qualified, lest I should find my self obliged to relieve him ? What is this, but to hinder him, as much as in you lies, from being happy *for ever*, for fear he should be a little more at Ease in *this Life* ? Be true to your Religion, and go through with it ; it obliges you to shew all Pity and good Nature, even to the *Bodies* of your Slaves ; and then when that is settled and believed, you will find your selves disposed to shew all Mercy to their *Souls* ; since the best Reason you can find for being cruel to their Souls, is fetched from the Fears of being afterwards disabled from being cruel to their Bodies. Were one talking to good *Christians* on this Subject, we should only need to say to them—Here is an Opportunity of being merciful both to the Souls and Bodies of your fellow Creatures, for whom *Christ* died, as well as you, and both whose Soul and Blood He will require at your Hands, at the last Day, as far as you were instrumental in



in Tormenting the one, without Occasion and most just Necessity; and in hindring the other from coming to the Knowledge and Faith in *Christ*, that was to save it.

The *Third* and last Pretence, is built upon the same Bottom, *i. e.* that of Interest: For, since they bought their Slaves for Money, they should be Losers by permitting them to be made Christians, since after that, they could not part with them for Money; it being, they say, Unlawful to sell *Christians*.

Away with all these Honours, that are so hurtful to our Lord! I dare engage He parts most freely with them: He well remembers, how he who betrayed Him, gave Him first a *Kiss*; and could never since endure, that a seeming Respect should do Him Mischief, and debar Him of a real Advantage. A *Christian* must not, it seems, be Sold; but then he shall not be a *Christian*, because he may not afterwards be Sold. This is too like to—*Hail King of the Jews*, and Buffeting Him, *bowing the Knee before Him*, and then Spitting at Him. If *Christ* might be the Advocate for these poor People, He would consent, He would intreat they might be Sold, condemned to Bonds, to Stripes, Imprisonment, and Death, rather than live the Slaves of Sin, and Unbelievers, the freest and most arbitrary Princes of their Country. He was Himself both Sold and Bound, and loves a virtuous and religious Slave, rather the better for his Chains or Clogg. Let but the Soul be free from Sin, and the Hands clean from all Unrighteousness, and He regards not how the Body is incumbered with its Weights, nor how those Hands are worn with Bonds and Labours.

But after all, it is far from certain, that the Laws forbid a *Christian* to be Sold: If Men had truly a Propriety in their Slaves before they were Baptized, and could dispose of them as they do of other Goods and Cattel for Money, or its worth, I dare be positive the *Laws of Christ* will not deprive them of this Property; and I am very sure the *Laws of the Kingdom* take not away the Right of such a Sale, upon receiving Baptism, if it were justifiable before.

But did the Laws indeed pretend, in such a sort, to honour *Christ's Religion*, it could be no hard matter to convince our Lawgivers, how prejudicial all such Favours were to Christianity; and to desire them no longer to honour *Christians* already, with such Privileges as put a Stop to the Propagation, and farther growth of *Christianity*; but let the Christians (as was said above) be Sold, and Bound, and Scourged, condemned to Bonds and Imprisonment, to endure all Hardships and Disgrace, *and to enter into Heaven, Blind, and Halt, and Maimed*, rather than having two Eyes, and Hands and Feet entire, to perish Miserably. That is the Sum of all I have been saying, (and which may shame one to recount) that were these Reasons and Pretences, for with-holding Baptism from our Slaves in our *Plantations* abroad, justifiable and true, they ought to be removed: And all that can consider seriously these Things, will certainly consent, nay, and be glad, that Slaves, though *Christians*, might be Bought and Sold, and used like Slaves, rather than still be Bought and Sold, and used like Slaves, and not permitted to be *Christians*. And one may wonder how a *Christian Government* can look upon it self as unconcerned in this Affair; and only consider these unhappy Wretches, as Creatures that save the Kingdom the Charge of transporting Horses, and Beasts of Carriage, for the *Islands* Service, without reflecting on their Shape and Form, and intellectual Powers, and without looking up to *Christ* their common Master, the Saviour and Redeemer of us all.

This unconcernedness of the Publick it is, most probably, that encourages a great many private People at home amongst our selves, to keep these *Africans*, or *Indians*, in their native Ignorance and Blindness, and to continue them *Infidels* in the midst of a *Christian Kingdom*. These People ought to think what answer they will make to *Christ*, when He shall ask them, why they would not help to increase His Kingdom, and to make their fellow Creatures as Happy, as they hoped themselves to be, by being  
called



*called by His Name?* Such Questions will be asked them, with Severity enough, and will require a better Answer than, I fear, the subtlest Christian in the World can make: And therefore, sure, it were better to prevent them by removing the Occasion.

Thus I have done with the *single Case*, that I proposed to consider at this Time. The Excellent Labours of my *Honoured Brethren*, who have gone before me, in this Exercise, have truly made it almost necessary for me, to confine my self to some such single Subject: They have, with so much Learning, Piety and Prudence, and so discreet a Zeal, handled all the general Heads; that whether I should have tried to shew the Excellency and Usefulness of such an *Institution and Society*, as ours is: The general Obligations *all Christians*, and in particular, *all in holy Orders*, lye under, to promote this Charitable Work of bringing Souls to *Christ*; or whether I should have ventured to prescribe and lay down *Rules* for the conducting our selves and others in this Affair; or have proposed some proper *Means*, for the better carrying on this great Design; or should have spent my Time in returning Thanks and Praise to God, for the Grace He hath given to those who, all along, have shewn an Exemplary truly Christian Fervency, in promoting, and contributing to this good Work; or in Encouraging, Exhorting, and Persuading others to the like: Whatever of this kind I should have undertaken, my best Endeavours had, I find, been happily superseded.

But that which chiefly inclined me to speak to this particular Case, at this Time, was—That it is really, now, *our own Case*; a thing, in which we are all of us here, that belong to *this Society*, so personally concerned, that it behoves us, every one of us, to think of it. We are now, by the Munificence of a truly *Honourable Gentleman* \*, our selves become the *Patrons* of at least *Three Hundred Slaves*, who are to Cultivate, and be Maintained upon the *two Plantations* he hath left to *this Society*, for the promoting Learning and Religion.

The Name of this our *Noble Benefactor* will certainly be held, by *this Religious Corporation*, in everlasting Honour and Remembrance. And though the constant good Effects of this his Bounty, will speak his Praises to Posterity; yet some good Hand, I hope, will sooner pay due Honours to his Memory, and recommend his great Example to such as shall be found able, in some Degree, to follow it. For, give me leave to assure you, (you that know it not) that after all that hath been done, *the Issues, and the necessary Charges of the Society*, do double, very near, the certain and the settled Yearly Income of it, and that too, but just as certain and as settled as the Life of Man: And therefore it requires that *others* also, like this our good *Araunah*, should give as a King. I see, and cannot but adore, the gracious Hand of God, in thus supplying our Necessities, by casual unexpected Charitable Benefactions: Nor have we any Reason to distrust the Continuance of His Goodness, whilst we sincerely seek His Glory, and the Good of Mankind. But He Himself, who, for a Season, bid the *Ravens* feed the *Prophet*, and then commanded a *Widow Woman* to sustain him, (her self the while sustained by Miracle) 1 *Kings* xvii. 4, &c. yet, *after*, left him to subsist, as others did, by common Providence, and usual humane Methods—But I forget my self—The thing I was to say, was this, or something like it; That if all the Slaves throughout *America*, and every *Island* in those Seas, were to continue Infidels for ever, yet *ours alone must needs be Christians*: We must instruct them in the Faith of *Christ*, bring them to Baptism, and put them in the way that leads to everlasting Life. This will be preaching *by Example*, the most effectual way of recommending Doctrines, to a hard and unbelieving World, blinded by Interest, and other Prepossessions.

And this, it may be, will weigh more, and operate better, with those who are concerned, than the Example both of *French* and *Spaniards* will, who all along have

\* Colonel Codrington.



brought their Slaves to Baptism. Who could endure so absurd and wounding a Reproach objected with Cause, as this—That *those poor Men*, the Profit of whose never-ceasing Labours is bestowed by a *Christian Gentleman*, on a *Society* erected and established by a *Christian King*, (of ever glorious Memory) to propagate *the Christian Faith*, should not themselves be suffered to be *Christians*? How would that merciful Command of God, in *Deut. xxv. 4.* rise up in Judgment and condemn us all—*Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn*, i. e. Thou shalt not starve the Creature, whilst he is preparing Bread to feed his Master. That Text, I undertake to say, shall never be applied to *this Society*, with any manner of Reproach. The *Servants* of *this Society* shall be, assuredly, the *Lord's Free-Men*, whatever else their Condition shall be in this World; and yet, I hope, even *that* will be changed a good deal for the better: They must be *Christians*, and they will be treated too as such, i. e. with all the Mercy and good Nature that can well be shewn, consistently with their continuing *Useful* and *Laborious Servants*, which certainly are things that may be tolerably reconciled. And yet, with all the warmest Wishes and Desires that a zealous Heart can have, to see this matter take Effect, it will be very difficult for a considering Man, not to conclude, it must, and ought to be, *a Work of Time*, and *the maturest Counsels*: It will require, and will employ the ablest Heads we have, and Men of the most comprehensive Views amongst *this great Society*, to find out such a *Blessed Medium*. And to their best Deliberation, Circumspection, utmost Caution and Discretion, but most especially to God's Blessing, it is that we must leave it; to whom be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Glory, Praise and Dominion, now and for ever.



## S E R M O N

On the FAST-DAY, January the 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>, against  
*Such as Delight in War.* By a Divine of the Church  
 of *England.* Now reprinted exactly from the Ori-  
 ginal, with some Additions which were omitted by  
 the Publisher of the former Impressions.

PSALM LXVIII. Ver. 30.

*Rebuke the Company of Spearmen, the Multitude of the Bulls, with  
 the Calves of the People, till every one submit himself with Pieces of  
 Silver. Scatter thou the People that delight in War.*

**D**AVID having brought the Ark of God up to *Jerusalem*, and prepared a  
 noble Tabernacle for its Reception, was in hopes that God would be more  
 favourable to him, for its Sake and Presence; and having already obtained  
 some great Advantages over his Enemies, and being again engaged in some  
 new War, he composed this *Psalms*, wherein, as he returns his Praises for his former  
 Success, so he implores anew the Assistance of God in his present Expedition; and en-  
 courages himself to hope for it, from the many signal Favours he had heretofore shewn to  
 his People, in bringing them out of *Egypt*, sustaining them in the Wilderness, and set-  
 tling them in the Land of *Canaan*; And the Words of the Text are a kind of Prayer  
 of Imprecation against his Enemies, that all the Hindrances of Peace might be re-  
 moved, and all the Instruments of War confounded; *Rebuke the Company of Spearmen,  
 the Multitude of the Bulls, with the Calves of the People, till every one submit himself with  
 Pieces of Silver. Scatter thou the People that delight in War.* Of which Words I will,  
 in the first place give a short and easy Explanation; and in the second, see what Use  
 we may make of them.

*First*, Of the Terms here used. By the *Company of Spearmen*, we naturally under-  
 stand Soldiers, that being a Weapon generally used in all Armies; and by *rebuking  
 them* is meant humbling their Pride, and stopping them in their Career. By the *Mul-  
 titude of Bulls*, are meant Kings and Princes, Generals and great Officers; those Crea-  
 tures being put, in Scripture, to denote the great Men of the World, fierce and wild,  
 head-strong and violent, ranging about the Grounds and Pastures, not to be bounded or  
 restrained. So in *Psal. xxii. 12. Many Bulls have compassed me, strong Bulls of Bashan  
 have set me round.* So in *Isa. xxxiv. 7. Ezek. xxxix. 18. Amos iv. 1. Hear this ye  
 Kine of Bashan, that are in the Mountains of Samaria, which oppress the Poor and crush  
 the Needy; which say to their Masters, Bring, and let us drink.* In all which Places are  
 understood, insolent and wanton great Men, that come about lawless and uncontrolled,  
 and take the World before them to be all their own. By *the Calves of the People* may  
 be understood the Common Soldiers, who follow their Leaders, as those Creatures do  
 the Chief of the Herd; led by Sight and by Example, without any consideration of their  
 own. These and their Commanders *David* prays may be rebuked, and brought so  
 low,



low, that they may come and submit themselves, and bring their Tribute in their Hands, which is the Meaning of *humbly bringing pieces of Silver with them*, because they paid their Tribute and their Ransom in them. So that hitherto the Words of the Text are a Prayer of King *David*, that God would utterly subdue, and bring to nought his Enemies, both Prince and People, Generals and their Armies. They are not to be understood of any of *his own People* either Civil or Military; for that had been a little below his Princely Dignity, who was entirely Master of his own Affairs, and the sole Judge of Peace and War, himself. Nor are they to be understood of any Nation, Prince, or People in *Alliance* with him, for he was in none at this Time, that we know of; but they are to be understood of those *his Enemies*, who were actually in War against him, and the following Words are more particular, and tell what kind of Enemies these were, and shew withal the Justice and the Reasonableness of such a Prayer. *Scatter thou* (he offers it to God) *the People that delight in War*, the Kings and People that do not go to War unwillingly, and upon absolutely just and necessary Grounds and Occasions, and such Affronts and Injuries, and Provocations, as are not to be endured with any Safety to the Publick; but such as *make* Occasions when there are none; and such as *take the least* Occasions, and lay hold upon the smallest Injuries, and slightest Provocations: Such as go to War to satisfy their Vain-glory, their Ambition, their Covetousness, and their exorbitant Desire of Rule and Riches: Such as delight in War, for the Power of Mischief and Revenge-Sake, and for no truly good and honest Cause. These are the People *David* begs of God to scatter and confound. And this is a Prayer, that every good and wise Man joins with him in, and cannot help saying *Amen* in earnest to it. Let us see to the Thing it self, after this Explanation of the Terms.

Peace is, undoubtedly, the State, in which God made, and with which he designed to bless the World; as well because he intended we should all of us be happy (which out of Peace we cannot be) as also that the Violation and Breach of it always proceeds from Evil, and is occasioned through some Fault or other, which is contrary to God's Purpose and Design, and against some general or particular Command. One of the Parties either does to the other what God forbids him to do, or refuses to do what God commands. All War arises either from positive Injury done, or from Denial of doing Justice. These things demonstrate evidently, that War is contrary to God's Design, and that Peace is the State and Condition which he approves; and in which Men can be only universally happy; for God designs that all Men should be happy even in this Life; and he commands that no one should do Injury to his Neighbour: Now War occasions Mischief to Mankind, and Injury generally is the Occasion of War.

But although God's primary Intention and Design, was to make and keep Men happy, and that Peace would certainly effect it, in its proper Instances; yet is not War therefore unlawful, upon that Side where it is just and necessary; but is equally approved of God, with Peace it self, as being the only way of compassing the Ends of Peace; it was the necessary means of regaining that Security and Ease, which was lost by Injury and Injustice; and it is not to be endured, when it is not in Order to a true and lasting Peace. The Commands of God are, certainly, that all Men should live in the constant exercise of Justice, Truth, and Charity to each other; and therefore it is as much his Will, that a Man should suffer no Injury from another, as it is that he should do none to another; so that whatsoever is absolutely necessary to the preserving or restoring Ease and Security to Mankind, must needs be approved of God, because it is the way and means by which they only can arrive at that happiness, which God intends Originally to bless them with; for the constant suffering of one Nation at the hands of another, does not beget or procure Peace, but rather invites repeated Injuries. There would be, otherwise, no reconciling *the Lord of Hosts*, with *the God of Peace*; i. e. the Dislike he has of all Violence and Mischief offered by one Man, or one Nation  
to



to another, with the many Commands he gives himself, to His own People, to war against several Nations, and his raising up several Nations against his own People, sometimes almost to their Extermination and Excision. And thus it is, we are to understand the many Precepts and Exhortations to follow Peace, and to the avoiding Quarrels and Contentions, in the Gospel. Our Saviour is indeed the *Prince of Peace*, and the Gospel is *the Gospel of Peace*, and Christians are to be *the Sons of Peace*, even in the literal Sense. And it is certain that if the Precepts of our Lord were observed, as they ought to be, there would be neither private Quarrels nor publick Wars: Because that every thing that may either occasion, or prevent Debate or War, is certainly commanded or prohibited by *Christ*, so that Christianity is professedly and designedly the Doctrine of Peace, and they who observe it carefully, will pursue nothing but Peace. And in this Sense it is true, that War is against both the Design and Doctrine of *Christ*; and if all Men were good Christians, there would be no such thing as War in the World. But it will not from hence follow, that all Wars and Contentions among Christians, are unlawful, because that the Doctrines of *Christ* would (if attended to) prevent them: No more than it follows that all Penal Laws, and all Judicial Oaths, are unlawful among Christians; because they are commanded every One, *To love his Neighbour*, and *to speak the Truth*, and *to do no wickedness*. If all People would speak nothing but Truth, and all the Truth they were required to speak, an Oath would be needless, and the Testimony of God be called upon in vain; it would neither be wanted to the Confirmation of Truth, nor to the making an end of any Difference, because the Truth would be as well discovered without it, and the Difference be as well decided. And so, if all Men would be Just and Righteous, as *Christ* commands them to be, there would be no occasion for Magistrates to punish them with Death, or Banishment, or Confiscation of Estate. But it does not from hence follow, that when the Truth cannot possibly be discovered, without a Solemn and Judicial Invocation of God, as a Witness and Avenger, nor the Disputes and Differences of Men be otherwise determined, that then an Oath should be unlawful, although Christians are commanded *not to Swear*: Nor that evil Doers, and wicked and unjust People, are not to be punished and put to Death, although all Christians are commanded in the Gospel, *to be merciful, and not to kill*. The Occasion both of Oaths and Punishments is something Evil, and undoubtedly forbidden by *Christ*; but when this Evil is committed, and this Occasion given, *Christ* does not command Men not to punish evil Doers, nor to secure themselves against the like, or greater Mischief for the future. And so it is in the Case of War, if People would be just and true, and good Christians, there would be no such thing as War among them; but if they will be false, and covetous, and cruel, and ambitious, and offend against the Laws of *Christ*, they must be punished for their being so; or at least Christianity does not hinder the injured and afflicted from endeavouring to secure themselves from suffering more Evil, and from repairing the Mischiefs they have already suffered. It can serve no End or Interest of Religion, to command a People to undergo whatever Evils a wanton, ambitious, or malicious Adversary can see fit to inflict. For the true Reason why any one *private Person* is counselled in the Gospel, rather to suffer patiently, than retaliate an Injury, is, to prevent a greater Mischief than that which he suffers, which private Revenge would certainly occasion to him; for there is, really, no intrinsic Worth in suffering, nor is it a thing that God delights in: But it is for the Peace and good of Mankind, that they should have their Passions in Subjection, and be Masters of themselves, and subdue those violent Inclinations most Men have to vindicate severely the least Affronts and Injuries that are offered them; which still beget new Quarrels, and occasion greater Mischiefs. But now this End would not be answered by tying up the Hands of one Party only: And it had been to deliver up Christians (as fast as they became such) into the Will of their Enemies, with their Hands and Feet fettered  
and



and bound ; and would have prevented the Conversion of the Heathen World ; for what Kingdom would have turned Christian, if they had been thereby exposed to the Insults of all their Neighbours, and must have been tied to make no manner of Resistance ? This would have put a most effectual Bar to the spreading the Doctrine of the Gospel. And therefore the evident and unavoidable Mischiefs and Absurdities that would follow, make it demonstrable, That War, when it is just and necessary, is not unlawful and forbidden to Christians. It is not on any such Account that *David* curses, in a manner, all the Instruments of War : *Rebuke the Spear-men ; and scatter those that delight in War.* For he was himself a great Warriour, and fought the *Lord's Battles*, as they are called, because they were in Favour of his chosen People, and because they were prospered by him : But the Strefs of the Prayer is bent against such as *took delight in War*, and made it their Choice, without a very just Occasion, and most absolute Necessity.

There are few People in the World, so barbarous by Nature, or who have by Custom and cruel Practices acquired so inhuman a Temper, as to take a Delight in the Miseries of Mankind, that are the usual and almost unavoidable Consequences of War. The horrible Waste and Desolation of fair and fruitful Countries, the Sacking and Burning Rich and Populous Cities, the Mutilations, Wounds, and Deaths of the Men of Arms, the Cries and Lamentations of the miserable Sufferers of all sorts, are things that the most insensible and hardened People cannot possibly delight in. But if they will neglect, and overlook, and venture the bringing all these Miseries and Evils upon Peoples Heads, although they see and know them unavoidable, rather than forego the Satisfaction of their vain, ambitious, covetous, or cruel Desires, then they are properly said to *delight in War*, and the evil Consequences of it, let them pretend to never so much Care and Tendernefs of Peoples Lives and Fortunes.

It is the hard Fortune of Mankind, that they cannot possibly live without a strict Subjection to some Governors ; and that they who are intrusted with that Government, must of Necessity have a very great Power, which they may also abuse, if they will, to Purposes directly contrary to the very Ends of Government. They must have a very great Power, or else they can do no great Good ; for a little Power can do but little Good, or prevent but little Evil ; and therefore it is in vain to expect any considerable Matters from a too-closely limited and restrained Power. And yet where there is a great Power of doing great Matters and much Good, there is also a Power of doing great Mischief, if it be misapplied : And that must needs depend very much upon the Will of those who have that Power. Thus, for a great many good Reasons, the Power of Peace and War is, in most Nations, lodged in the Hands of Princes ; and therefore we see that Peace or War, depend much more upon the Temper, Humour, Will and Disposition of Princes, than on the true and just Necessities of their Kingdoms. Sometimes a Prince is by Nature fearful and sluggish, or else given up to Luxury and Softness, and therefore will not be alarmed by the most insolent and loudest Provocations, and by the greatest and most lasting Injuries and Affronts ; but will endure beyond all Reason, both Infamy and Loss, rather than be disturbed. This is a Patience that is neither Christian nor Princely, nor indeed Manly, but such as frequently entails great Misery, as well as great Dishonour on a Nation : For the Blood of a People does sometimes, like standing Waters, stagnate, putrify, and breed corrupt and dangerous Humours ; and though a long and ignominious Peace, be easy to that present Generation which enjoys it, yet it breaks out on their Posterity with greater Violence and Hazard. And therefore such an obstinate Resolution of maintaining Peace whatever happens, is really no Kindness to a Nation at the long-run ; and such a Prince has the Power of the Sword committed to him to no purpose, when the just Occasions and Necessities of his People will not prevail to the drawing it out, in their Defence. There is certainly an Excess on this Hand, as well as on the other ; and this Extreme is also faulty.



But it happens but very seldom, and therefore is the less regarded. The Evils that oppress the World, do generally proceed from the contrary Tempers and Resolutions of Princes. Sometimes a little Injury is deeply resented, and some trivial Satisfaction or Demand being denied, is laid to Heart, and made the Occasion of a War: Sometimes a Fortrefs, City, or a little Country lies conveniently for such a Prince, and, if it were in other Hands, would greatly incommode him; the Want of this is not to be endured, and an Opportunity of gaining it must needs, at any Rate, be found and taken hold of: Sometimes a Mischief very distant and uncertain is strongly apprehended, and must needs be guarded against; and such unreasonable Precautions oft occasion Wars: Sometimes one Prince has an Advantage in his Hands of greater Force, of Money, Arms, and Men, and only wants an Opportunity of using it against another; and therefore sets himself to seek an Occasion of invading him, which any the smallest Matter gives him, there being little wanting where both the Will and Means are ready: Sometimes the very Hope of Spoil, and rich Rewards brings War into an inoffensive Country; and sometimes the Ambition of a great Name, the Honour of a Triumph, the Glory of finding out new Enemies, and conquering strange Countries, have engaged great Kingdoms in great Wars.

All these things, and many other such, mean and unworthy as they are, have been the Occasions of bringing mighty Calamities and Miseries upon the World. Not a single Passion of those great Men, though never so unreasonable and extravagant, but is gratified at the Expence of a prodigious Treasure both of the Blood and Money of their Subjects. This, I say, is the hard Fortune of Mankind; but yet it is almost inevitable, for the Power of Peace and War is, to prevent a world of Inconveniencies that would otherwise arise, most wisely placed in Princes; and yet if it is not exercised with the greatest Prudence and Goodness imaginable, it is liable to the greatest Abuse, and to become the Instrument of every evil Affection and Suggestion. So easy is it to find out Excuses, and that under the pretence of the Publick Good, and of a just and absolute Necessity, to gratify the most vain-glorious Humour, the most ambitious, covetous, or cruel Inclinations.

There is none but Good Angels who have the Power of doing Good and no Evil. All mortal Creatures that are capable of doing Good to Men, are, by the same Power, enabled also to do them much Mischief; and they who are by God's Appointment, and by the Nature of their Office, to be the Instruments of great Good to Mankind, may by the same Means be, as they often are, their great Plague and Mischief: And there is no one way of being so mischievous to the World, at one Time, as *taking delight in War*.

It was not without some Wit as well as Reason, that *Philiscus* advised *Alexander*, whilst he was seeking Glory and Immortality of Fame, that he should take good heed that he did not make himself a *Plague* or *Pestilence*; intimating that great and forward Soldiers were, in Truth, no better than infectious ravaging Distempers, wasting whole Countries, and desolating Cities: That those Diseases were indeed recorded to Posterity, and lived in *Fame*, but were both horrible and odious to all that heard of them or read them. And indeed, if there be any Difference betwixt these Plagues, it is to the Advantage of those meerly Passive ones that are the Instruments of God's Providence, in punishing the World, themselves without any Malice or Design; and *David*, under the hard Necessity of choosing one, chose the destroying Angel of God, rather than the Sword of War, to punish his Offences; knowing that the infinite Compassions of God fail not, but that he, in the midst of Wrath, thinks upon Mercy; whereas the Fury of enraged victorious Men is deaf, and obstinate, and unrelenting.

These warlike and ambitious Leaders make good Pictures when they are dead: They make a shining Figure in our Histories, and fill our Chronicles with great variety of Events,



Events, they store the Childrens Memories with brave Exploits, and entertain them with Delight and Pleasure; and raise fantastick high Conceits in the Minds of their Countrymen, as though they were enobled by the Valour of their Ancestors, and that *their* Victories reflected Praise and Glory on their late Descendants. These are the mighty Benefits that many of these Heroes of Antiquity conferred upon Posterity, and worth, no doubt of it, that vast Expence of Blood and Treasure these great Conquests cost them! What is the Peace and Quiet of the World, the Lives, and Liberties, and Fortunes of a great many hundred thousand Subjects, in Comparison with the Name of *Conqueror*? Nothing is certainly too dear, to have it said, that such a Prince extended his Dominions to such a Sea or River, so many Leagues beyond their former Bounds: This is exceeding fine, although at the same Time it is so many Leagues beyond all Faith, and Truth, and Reason, and Conscience; and that it is certain, that when he broke through such a Country, he also broke through Justice, Honour, and Religion, through the most solemn Leagues and Contracts, confirmed with Vows, and Promises, and Sacred Oaths, in the most serious and tremendous manner, and that he valued neither God nor Man equally with a good Frontier.

This is the Way these Princes take to Fame, and *their Posterity Praise their Saying*, without considering how much Misery they brought upon their Generations; How many innocent People suffered both of their own and other's Subjects; How many thousands died; How many more were reduced to the extremest Misery, and the whole Nation brought almost to Beggary. It is a wrong Way the World is in, to crown those Actions with their Praise and Admiration, that should rather be charged with Infamy and Curses. I know not by what strange Delusion it is, that Posterity reads, with the greatest Pride and Pleasure, the Events and Actions of those Reigns, that were undoubtedly the most oppressive of their Ancestors; not with the Joy of People saved from such a Shipwreck, and secure themselves, but with a wild Ambition and Desire of riding in the like Storms. But sure the peaceful and the quiet Reigns were much the easiest to the Subject.

But since the Character of *taking Delight in War* is so truly infamous and odious in the Sight of God and all good Men; It is but reasonable and just that we should take great Heed of fixing it, where it is not certainly deserved, and ought to stand. A State of War is contrary to that of Peace; but one is full as lawful as the other; and the Spirit of God assures us by the wisest of Men, That *there is a Time for one as well as for the other*, Eccles. iii. 8. The greatest Princes of the World have sometimes been the greatest *Captains*, constrained by the Necessity of their Affairs to be continually engaged in Wars, either repelling Force, or vindicating Wrongs, or gloriously asserting Liberty. Would it be well to treat the Memories of those *Princes* ignominiously, as *taking Delight in War*, by whom alone it came to pass that any one could take Delight in Peace with Liberty? Were this a suitable Return for such a rescued miserable oppressed People from all the Insolence and Violence of either Civil or Religious Tyranny? Would it be well to brand the *Generals* thus who fought their Princes and their Countries Battles, at the constant Hazard of their Lives, only because they reaped the Honours and Advantages which their great Services deserved, and which their Stations would have claimed, had they been neither *wise nor valiant*, nor *successful*!

Would it be well to lay this heavy Charge upon the meaner *Officers*, or even upon the *common Soldiers*, who live in Arms, defend their Country, and annoy the Enemy, although they had no other Motive to it but their Pay? If their Employment be not honest and allowed, they should be told so; but if it be, they can no more be said to *delight in War*, i. e. in all the Miseries and mischievous Effects of War, than they who carefully look after People's Health, to take Delight in their Diseases and their Sufferings; or they who plead the Causes of their Clients, to take Delight in People's Injuries and Oppressions;



Oppressions; or they who are the Ministers of Justice, can properly be said to take Delight in the severest Executions of it; although they all of them are well rewarded for the Pains they take, and would not undertake those Offices without it. This were too thankless and injurious a Treatment of those brave Men, by whom we enjoy our Safety and our Ease; and who, besides the Hopes of Recompence, may be presumed to act upon as worthy and as honourable Principles, as those who are the readiest to disarm them.

These are the Fallacies the Men of Craft would put upon the People, who have been long accustomed to be fed with *Words* instead of *Things*. P E A C E is the happy Syllable that every Body likes, and thinks he understands, and fancies it contains a thousand Blessings, which yet, in truth, belong not to it. But be it as full of Blessings as it will, it is not however true, that all who live in War, nor all who gain by War, should take Delight therein. That is too hard a Character to be misapplied and fixed without great Certainty, on any one.

Nor is it less unjust and mischievous, that all who judge not right of the Necessity of War, should be reproached as *Enemies to Peace*: That is another Artifice of the dark Masters and Promoters of all Slander, by which they delude the unwary and inconsiderate ones. The *military Men* who stand in their Way, must by all Means be said to *take Delight in War*, because it is their Trade; the *Civil* who would fain be safe, and fly for Refuge to the Camp, must all of them be represented as *Enemies to Peace*. These are the odious Skins in which Men cloath their Enemies, before they think of hunting them: But is this Usage honest, just, or Christian-like? Is it not possible for Men to be mistaken without Malice? Or to judge amiss without Design of hindring any Good, or doing any Evil? Methinks in Matters that at least are doubtful, and where the *Event* alone can rightly determine which of the contending Parties judged the best, a little better Quarter might be given, and a more favourable Censure passed. Are the People who seem to be afraid of an unsecure Peace, so destitute of all Defence, as to deserve immediately to be esteemed its Enemies? Can Men upon the sudden fall into Confidence and good Opinion of a Prince, whom never Creature trusted yet but was deceived? Or are we at length become a Match in *Fraud* and *Finesse* for that Court, so that we need to apprehend no Danger from it? Has it been long a Fault to be suspicious of *French Menagery*? How comes it that all the *Princes* of the World abroad concur in the same Distrust and Diffidence of this their *common Enemy*; and O N E especially, who if he means well to himself, means certainly as well to us? But since Authorities and great Names are Arguments that rather *silence* than *convince*, and since *Respect* stops many a Reply that Reason has in readiness, I leave this sacred Shelter, and betake my self to common Sense, and only desire to know, whether the Men themselves who are on this side the Question, are not as fit to Judge, and as capable of Judging as their Neighbours? Is it because they understand not so well the situation of Affairs abroad, or those at home? Do they want Skill, or Observation, or Experience? Are they much less acquainted with the Riches or the Poverty, the Strength or Weakness of the Enemy, or of their own Country than other Folks? Or know they nothing of the Powers and Interests of other States and Princes, or how to ballance them? Or have they no Estates or Fortunes of their own at home to save or lose? Do they not equally contribute to the Publick Charge, and are they not Assessed like other Men? Is not the Service of the War by Sea and Land, Is not the Civil List, and every Branch of the Revenue, assisted by their Payments in proportion to their Powers, as much as by those who differ from them? Are they less Hospitable, less Beneficent, less Charitable than their Fellow-Subjects? Are they less sensible of Grief or Loss, than other Folks? Does not the War deprive them of their Relations, Kindred, Friends, and Acquaintance? And does it not abridge them of many great Conveniencies and Pleasures? And, in a word, do they not suffer equally with any People in the Kingdom? In what  
Respects



Respects can War be advantageous to Them? In what can Peace be prejudicial more than each will be to others in common with them?

I could to these add numberless Inquiries more, and make Recriminations without End, if they would serve to any good and honest Purpose. But our Diffensions want no Irritation; what I have said may be sufficient to shew (where People will open their Eyes or Ears) that there is neither Sense nor Reason, nor Justice, in calling those who are afraid of an *insecure* One, *Enemies to Peace*.

And thus, having shewn whom *David* meant, and whom he meant not, in his Prayer to God, to scatter those who delighted in War: And also shewn, what Reason and Justice People have to detest such Men as truly deserve that infamous and hateful Character; as also, whom we ought not to charge therewith, or with the being Enemies to Peace: I have, I find, but a little time left, for an Exhortation *to Repentance, and the humbling our selves before Almighty God, in order to the obtaining Pardon of all our great and manifest Transgressions; the averting of those heavy Judgments which our Provocations have deserved; and for imploring a Blessing on the present Treaty, that thereby may be produced, an honourable, secure and lasting Peace, to us and our Allies; and also to beg his Blessing on our United Arms, till such a Peace shall be submitted to.* Great things indeed, but not too great for Him, of whom we come to ask them! But oh, let not the Lord be angry if we humbly pray Him, that we may not want these mighty Blessings, till he can give them to our Humiliation and true Repentance! But let us owe them quickly to his undeserved and boundless Mercy!

The War we are engaged in, is acknowledged to be just, and the Successes God hath crowned it with, have been astonishingly great. And therefore they who now tell us, that we entred *wrong into it*, are those I doubt, who would have us go *wrong out of it*. Or if they mean that we have been at too great Charge, it is manifest they know not how to value those Successes. But I would speak to *Englishmen*. These great Successes, it is plain, have not been over-bought, because we are told——*It is by them, that the Enemies have been so far reduced, as to make Proposals for treating of a general Peace.*

Would they have done it then, without these great Successes? Or could we have obtained these great Successes at a less Expence? I am as glad to confront so senseless a Slander, with so great an *Authority*, as I am to say, that our Enemies have been at as great an Expence at least, to lose their Country, Cities, and their Armies, as we have been to win them, take them, and overcome them: And that their Children, and their Children's Children will be paying Debts (if Arbitrary Governments pay Debts) contracted by Disgraces, Losses and Defeats, which left them fighting still in *Chains* and *Slavery*, while our Posterity shall be discharging Debts contracted by their Fathers, to leave them the *Protestant Religion*, a *Protestant Succession*, and (which must keep them both) their *Liberties*.

The *Blessing* that we are to ask upon this *Treaty*, is, I conceive, in other Words——That *We* may have the Wisdom and the Resolution *to demand, and to insist upon*, and that the *Enemies* may have the Justice and the Grace *to yield up*, what we have hitherto been fighting for; as well because it is to be an honourable, secure, and lasting Peace (which otherwise we think it could not be) to Us and our Allies (who are to judge of it, as well as We) as also because *we are to beg the Divine Assistance on our United Arms, till the Enemies shall submit to such a Peace, as we would have, by Treaty.* Now surely, there is little need of fighting and continuing on a War, to obtain a Peace that would have none of those good Epithets belong to it; and therefore the Peace we beg for as a *Blessing*, must needs be such a one as we have been all along wishing for; it must be such as will be *honourable, secure and lasting*. And there are none, I hope, in all the Queen's Dominions, that will not heartily pray for such a Peace, or readily contribute to such a War.



Our Enemies themselves will hardly have the Malice, or the Confidence to say, this Nation is an Enemy to Peace, or that whatever could be done, has not been done, in order to the obtaining it. But we shall also give them Cause, I hope, to say, that all that can be done in order to the carrying on the War, is also done. The first, without the last, would only give them a Pleasure that we owe them not, and make us their Scorn, who have been hitherto their constant Terror. But let us not so much as preface the least Evil! I know very well, in whose Hands, under God, we are. This is a Peace or War, that is not like any other Peace or War that we or our Fathers have seen. It is one of the greatest Misfortunes that could befall this Nation at this Time, that People's Consideration should be so short and slight, as to think this Treaty will determine only whether they shall save a little Money by Peace, or spend a little more by carrying on the War; whereas it will determine, in all likelihood, whether they shall ever have Abilities and Power again, of giving or refusing. I do not mean that we should *Article* for or against a new Religion, a new Government, and a new King. But I mean, that unless the Peace be good, those things will certainly follow, in their Time, without and against all Articles: And therefore no Man can be too solicitous about this great Event, that will determine the Fortune of *Europe* for many Years, and it may be for many Ages; and for our own particular, determine, in its Consequence, of all we have. And therefore, they who are in earnest zealous for *the Glory and Safety of the Queen, the Preservation of the Protestant Religion, and the Protestant Succession, and for the English Laws and Liberties*, will certainly beg of God, so to direct, guide, and assist those whom the Queen employs in this most nice and perillous Affair of Treating, that such a Peace may be obtained, as will secure them all, to us and our Posterity: Or (should the War be still found necessary) that He would go forth with our Armies, in the most glorious and surprising Manner he hath hitherto done, and raise us up (He only can) *a General, wise, and brave, and fortunate*, as was our last.

These are the Blessings that we want, and come to ask of God. But when I look at Home, and see the Use that we have made of those we have already had; the Slight that we have put upon *Ten Years* Success; the servile, base, degenerate Spirit that is growing upon us; the tame Submissions, shameless Flatteries, and unexampled Prostitutions of Honour and Conscience to the Mammon of Unrighteousness: When I consider how the Sorceries of *France* prevail, and with what Contempt the *Protestant* Interest and Religion abroad are treated by many among us; and with what Tenderneſs and ill-concealed Content a great many People speak of *One*, who if ever he comes, will bring a sure Destruction to this Church and State, along with him: And what a marvellous Stillness and Security there is, with respect to *Popery*; nay, how suspicious a thing it grows for People to open their Mouths with any degree of Warmth, against that Superstition:

When I consider these, and many other things of the like kind, that cannot but occur to a Serious Man that looks about him, it makes it hard for me to hope, that the Prayers of such a People should be heard. But when I look to God, and know he is the Fountain of Goodness, Mercy, and Forgiveness, and that he deals with Men according to their Wants and to his Boundless Compassion in *Christ Jesus*, then I take Heart, and humbly pray him to bestow the Blessings on us we have been imploring at his gracious Hands; and that for *Jesus Christ's* sake. *To whom with the Father and the Blessed Spirit, be all Glory, Honour, &c.*



## The Judgment of the Church of *ENGLAND* in the Case of Lay-Baptism and of Dissenters Baptism.

### P R E F A C E to the R E A D E R.

**T**H E Author of a Book, whose Title is, *The Invalidity of Lay-Baptism*—having found 1st, That no one could validly baptize, but he who is commissioned by *Christ* to do it; and 2dly, That no one is commissioned by *Christ* to do it, but he who is *Episcopally ordained*; and, 3dly, That the Man who baptized him, was not *Episcopally ordained*, but a *Dissenting Teacher*: This Author, I say, tells us very fairly, that he procured himself to be baptized by an Episcopal Minister. And Dr. *Hicks*, in a long Letter to the Author, prefixed to this Book, thus compliments his great Performance, P. 12. “It is against the Authority of the pretended Ministers of this [*Presbyterian*] Mission, *who were never duly authorized*, and therefore cannot administer *truly valid Baptism*, that you have written your *excellent Book*, with great Strength and Perspicuity, as well as Modesty, and confirmed your *Doctrine* with your *Practice*, i. e. he had been *rebaptized*.”

As I knew this could not *regularly* and *lawfully* be done by any *Parish Priest* of the Church of *England*, without acquainting the *Bishop* of the Diocese therewith, as the *Rubric* commands, it being a new, and (as I take it) an extraordinary Case; so finding it to have been *actually* done, I concluded with my self, that the Bishop had been consulted with, and had given way to the solemn *rebaptizing* an adult Person, who had before been baptized by one of the *Presbyterian Ordination*, in or with *Water*, and *in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. It did not at all become me, nor was I concerned, to inquire, which of the Bishops it was, that gave way to, nor who the *Presbyter* was that performed, this new Work: But I set my self in great Earnest to consider, what the *Doctrine* and *Practice* of the Church of *England* was in this Case. Could I have trusted either the Doctor or his *Friend*, I needed to have gone no farther than this little Book; for there I found they were, both of them, very fully persuaded, that the Church of *England* does absolutely *nullify* and *invalidate* all Baptism conferred by any one who is not *Episcopally ordained*; and consequently, requires all such as have not been baptized by Episcopal Hands, to be *rebaptized*, since Baptism is held necessary by her, where it can be had. But having seriously considered the *Offices of Baptism*, and the *Rubrics*, and compared them with the subsequent *Practice* of the Episcopal Ministers, I could not find these two Writers had convincingly proved what they intended. And not thinking my self, at present, concerned in the main Matter disputed, *viz.* Whether Lay-Baptism be invalid, or whether all the *Presbyterian Ministers* are meer Lay-men, but only to know what the Opinion of the Church of *England* was in the Matter; I have, in the following Papers, only taken Notice of what these two Writers alledge, as from the Church of *England*, in Favour of their Point: Leaving the rest of the Book to be considered by others, who are at Leisure, and think it worth their while. I wondred indeed, that none of the *Church of England-Clergy* had taken any Notice of this Book, and the *Doctrine* endeavoured to be propagated by it, especially the *Parish-Priests of London*; for if this *Doctrine* be true, I dare engage there is not one of them but has a considerable Number of his Parishioners, who are not *baptized*, nor consequently *Christians*, and yet have lived in constant Communion with him, and have frequently received the Sacrament of *the Lord's Supper* at his Hands; which thing ought not to have been done, if they are not *Christians*.

He must, at this Rate, look to all the People who are upwards of fifty Years of Age; for it is twenty to one, but that they who were baptized before the Year 1660,

were



were baptized by *Dissenting Teachers*, and are consequently *not baptized* at all. He must also place all such as have left *the Separation* since 1660, and come over to the *Church*, of what Age soever, in the Rank of *Unbaptized*, because it is most likely they were baptized by Dissenting Teachers. Nay he must look to many who were baptized by *Church of England Ministers* : For some of them were the Children of Dissenters, and baptized by Dissenters ; and though they afterwards took Orders of the Church of *England*, yet not having been *validly* baptized themselves, they could not *validly* baptize others ; for their being Ministers of the Church of *England* did not make them *Christians* ; their *Ordinations* did not give them *true Baptism*, if they had it not before. What Work is here for a *London Minister* ! and yet I averr that every Word of it, is, and must be true, if Dissenting Ministers Baptism be invalid, according to the Doctrine of Dr. *Hicks*, and his *Friend* : And yet, I profess seriously, that though I am acquainted with many of these excellent Persons, and have often been at their Churches, yet did I never hear one of them tell his People, that if they had not been baptized by an Episcopal Minister, they must be baptized again, for *they were not Christians*.

For the Sake of these Consequences, I say, I wondred not a little that the Church-Clergy had not taken some Notice of these Doctrines, which are *written, printed, preached, and recommended* in Publick. They will, I assure them, when they grow to any Head, give them more Trouble, than they now seem to be aware of. But it may be they are frightned by what the Doctor says in his *Letter*, P. 17. “ In the same  
“ Place, Sir, you say you hope that none *vested with this Divine Authority*, will fight  
“ against it, &c. which if any Clergyman should do in the Manner you there mention  
“ (*i. e.*, appearing publickly in Opposition to the Subject of this Essay, *of the Invalidity*  
“ *of Lay-Baptism*, P. 120.) I could not but suspect that he was one of those, who  
“ took Gifts, and Presents of the *Dissenters*, to let the Names of their Children, who  
“ had no other but *Schismatical Lay-Baptisms*, be registred among the true Baptisms of  
“ the Church : or at least of another Sort, who to court the Favour and Applause of  
“ the *Dissenters*, either never preach in Defence of the Church against *Them* ; or if  
“ they do, they do it no otherwise than barely to shew, that the Church of *England*  
“ is a *safe Communion*, and that those who through Mistake separated from it, would  
“ be in no Danger of *Damnation*, if they returned to it. But to shew that Separation  
“ from it is *Schism*, and by Consequence a *damning Sin* ; and that the Separatists of all  
“ sorts from it, are, without the extraordinary Mercy of God, in great and apparent  
“ Danger of *Damnation* ; these Gentlemen love not to touch upon that Point, nor rise  
“ to that Height. It was, I suppose, a Reflection upon these Men, and the Indigna-  
“ tion he had against their double Practices, which provoked a *Divine* [Dr. *Birch*]  
“ not very many Years since, to utter a Sarcasm upon them, from the Pulpit, in Words  
“ to this Purpose, *That some* (at the Time he spoke it) *were become Fathers of the*  
“ *Church, who never were her true Sons*.

I have transcribed this Passage more at large than I needed to have done, on purpose to gratify the Doctor, who was so pleased with it, that I think he went a little out of his way, to fetch it in ; and I am afraid he has made the *silly and uncharitable Sarcasm*, his own, by his Allowance of it. I have ventured to put down the Name of that *Divine*, that People may know what Value to set upon that Sarcasm. He was himself born and bred a *Dissenter* (and therefore the Doctor will not know well what to say of his Baptism) and was brought over to the Church of *England*, by the Care and good Pains taken with him, by that most excellent Bishop of *Oxford*, Dr. *Fell* : But he (as the way of weak and warm Heads is) did not know where to stop. I say no more, because the Man is dead ; and should hardly have said this, had not the Party, principally aimed at by the Indignation of that *poor Divine*, been Doctor *Tillotson* the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, whose Name will live for ever, increasing in Esteem with all good



good and wise Men, when a Thousand of his pitiful Detracters shall soon be quite forgotten, or be remembered for a score or two of Years, only for some poor, peevish, and unchristian Sayings.

But must it indeed be so, that if a Clergyman of the Church of *England*, should write against *this notable Essay*, he must be one of these two sorts of Clergymen, whom the Doctor represents in such an odious Manner, that I hope there are not above Twenty such in the whole Kingdom? Cannot a Clergyman, who sees and dreads the Consequences such a Doctrine will draw after it, endeavour to persuade his Friends that such a Doctrine is not true, and try to prove it false by the best Arguments he can, without being ranked in the Number of such as deserve the *Pillory* and *Deprivation*? P. 18. Cannot an honest Clergyman defend the *Validity*, though not the *Regularity* and *Lawfulness* of Baptism, administered by Dissenting Teachers, without being false to his sacred Trust, if he believe himself warranted so to do, by Scripture, and Authority of the Church-Practice, both Antient and Modern? Must a Clergyman magnify his Office, at the Expence of Truth and Charity? Or is he obliged to suffer, patiently and silently, the *unchristianizing* not only so many Hundred Thousands of his own Countrymen, Friends, Acquaintance, and near Relations, but all the *Protestants* that are, and have been, for almost two hundred Years, throughout the World, as were not, and only because they were not, so happy as to be baptized by Men Episcopally Ordained? Is he, I say, obliged to suffer this, and hold his Tongue, rather than by his speaking to diminish the Sacredness of his own *Divine Authority*, and to encourage such as *Separate*, to go on in their own way? I put the worst of the Case, as these People will suppose it may be; and yet no wise and learned Clergyman, will find himself restrained, from opposing what he accounts a mischievous Error, and defending what he thinks an useful Truth, for fear of such Consequences as he knows he does not *design*, and knows they are not *Necessary*, nor will *follow* with People that can consider soberly, and reason justly. But we are fallen, God help us, into Times, when to be a *good Churchman*, means nothing less than *living up to her Doctrine, conforming to her Rules and Orders, communicating constantly with her in Prayers and Sacraments*: But it means, the being loud and contentious in the Church's Quarrel; the being exceeding mad against all that are not like-minded with us; the talking furiously for her Authority; and the decrying every thing that looks like Moderation and good Temper towards such as differ from us. And therefore whilst this Ferment lasts, whilst the Nation is under this Inchantment, this strong unnatural Violence, and the Suspension, as it were, of Reason, and calm Deliberation, I will cease to wonder, that some of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, appear not against a Doctrine, that, if it be true, has peopled Hell with many Millions. I will, I say, cease to wonder for a while; because I know not whether Reason, Judgment, Learning, Perspicuity, and all the Qualities that a good Writer ought to have, would signify much, if once the Word were given out, among the *Holy Brotherhood*, that such a Book was written *against* (what they are pleased to call) *the Church*. And indeed, this Argument is so strong, that I my self am forced to submit to it. As free as I am from any of the aforesaid Restraints, under which the Clergy lie; as little as I have to hope for, or to fear, on secular Accounts; yet do I not dare to own my self, the Writer of this Paper, by setting my Name before it. The Design I have, is as good as the Heart of Man can frame: The Cause I plead for, is that of *the Church of England*, of which I ever was, and am, and ever shall be, by the Grace of God, a very faithful and sincere Member; and I am, I think, retained in this good Cause, by Justice and great Charity; and I believe I have maintained it well, and like an honest and a reasonable Man: But yet I own, the Dread of drawing down the Indignation of the Church-Rabble upon me, is so great, that I will not have it so much as whispered, where I live, nor of what Profession I am. My Reasons and my Arguments



ments have so far favoured the *Dissenters*, that (whatever my Intentions were) they have proved them to be *Christians*, in the Opinion of *the Church of England*; and that I perceive will not go well down, nor be digested well (the more is the pity) by abundance of Smatterers, and young Students in Divinity, who would give more Credit to Doctor *H.* in this Case, recommending a Layman's Treatise, that condemns them all, than to a hundred other Lay-Mens Treatises, endeavouring to make them Christians, though they should come into the World, with the Approbation of *the Majority of the Bishops*. And this is another Cause of my Concealment, because I have no Heart to engage with such a wrathful Generation.

And here I put my Pen into the Inkhorn, and fell into a strong and deep Amusement, revolving in my Mind, with great Perplexity, the amazing Change of our Affairs, both Civil and Religious, within the compass of two Years! And whilst I was going, from the Fulness of my Heart, to utter strange things, I was as it were awakened and relieved, by the Visit of an old Acquaintance, that in his Time, had been considerable in *Doctors-Commons*. To him, after the usual Salutations past, I could not forbear reading (such was our Friendship) this *Preface*, as far as I had gone in it— Upon which, after a little Pause, he replied, in his grave Manner, to this Purpose; “Your Zeal, I find, has raised you a little above your usual Temper: I know not, till you shew me, what Arguments you have made use of, to prove the *Dissenters* to be *Christians*; but I can furnish you with one, if it has scaped your Memory, from *Doctors-Commons*: And that is, that all the *Prosecutions, Excommunications, Fines* and *Penalties*, that the Dissenters have undergone from the Days of *Old Elizabeth*, to the present Times, are so many Proofs of the Church of *England's* owning them to be *Christians*: For the *Court-Christian* has nothing to do with any one but *Christians*. And it would be a great Absurdity to *excommunicate* a Person that had no Right to *Church-Communion*; and he who is not *baptized*, has certainly no Right to *Church-Communion*.”

Here my good Friend ended; and so will I, when I have desired the Reader to place this, as a *fourth Proof* of my Position (which I think is a very sensible one, and next to *Demonstration*) and when I have adjured the *Dissenters*, as I heartily do, both Teachers and People, by all that is dear and valuable to them, to fulfil my Joy, in coming, and returning, to the Communion of the Church of *England*; That I may not only say I have proved them to be *Christians*, but that they are in this, and all other good Respects, not only *almost*, but *altogether as I am*, sincere and constantly-conforming Members of her.



## The Judgment of the Church of *ENGLAND* in the Case of Lay-Baptism and of Dissenters Baptism.

The General Position is,

*That the Church of England hath, by no Publick Act of hers, made or declared Lay-Baptism to be invalid.*

I. PROOF. **T**HIS will appear from the first Book of *Common-Prayer*, which was finished and confirmed by Act of Parliament in the 2 and 3 *Edward VI.* in 1548, and printed in 1549, of which Book the *Act* says,—*That it was, by the Aid of the Holy Ghost, with uniform Agreement, concluded by the Compilers.* And from the second Book of *Common-Prayer* put out in the 5 and 6 *Edward VI.* in 1552.

In these two Books, in the Office of *Private Baptism*, the *Rubrics* are,—*Let them that be present, call upon God for his Grace, and say the Lords-Prayer, if the Time will suffer. And then ONE of them shall name the Child, and dip him in the Water, or pour the Water upon him, saying these Words,*—*N. I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* 1. Book.

*To the Intent the Priest may examine and try whether the Child be lawfully baptized or no*—he is to ask these Questions of those who bring the aforesaid Child to Church.

1. “ *By whom* was this Child baptized ?
2. “ *Who was present* when the Child was baptized ?
3. “ *Whether they called upon God for Grace, and Succour, in that Necessity ?*
4. “ *With what thing or matter* did they baptize the Child ?
5. “ *With what Words* was the Child baptized ?
6. “ *Whether they think the Child to be lawfully and perfectly baptized ?*

These things are in the 1st and 2d Books of *Edward VI.*

Now the Answer to the *first Question*, might well have been in *Edward VI.*'s Days—*John Lawrence* the Uncle; or *Jane Lawrence* the Midwife, or *George Hays* a Neighbour and Gentleman. Because in Cases of Necessity, the Baptism of Lay-men was allowed to be used in the Days of Popery; and *Midwives* were expressly ordered to be taught the Form of Baptizing, in *Latin*. And it does not appear that the *first Reformers* changed this Practice. The first *Rubric* does, without any Strain or Violence, suppose the Child to be baptized by a Lay-Person. The Words are general, *Let them that be present*—and then—*let one of them*—do so and so—*i. e.* baptize it. I will not trouble the Reader with proving this at large, in this place; both *Doctor* and *Student* agree, that in this *Rubric Lay-Baptism* was supposed and allowed, but that it is now well mended: instead of *one of them*, it is now *the lawful Minister*. See the Doctor's Letter to the Author of *Lay-Baptism* invalid, pag. 24. and the Author, pag. 112.

The *second Question* is asked for the Satisfaction of the Minister and the Congregation. For Witnesses are not essentially necessary to Baptism, but the Minister cannot be sure the Child was before-baptized, unless it be attested by Witnesses.

The *third Question* may be answered by saying Nothing, and the Baptism would not be at all affected by it. For though People should and ought to call upon God for Grace and Succour, in that and all other Cases of Necessity, yet if they should omit or forget to do so, through Haste, and Fright, and Hurry, the Child might, notwithstanding that, be rightly baptized. But to call upon God for Grace, is, in this place,  
to



to say the *Lords-Prayer*; as is also evident from the *Catechism* in the Words of the *Catechist* just before that Prayer. And no body will affirm that the *Lords-Prayer*, or any other Prayer, is so *Essential* to Baptism, as to make it *invalid*, if omitted.

The *fourth* and *fifth* Questions must be positively answered—*With Water*; and *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: Or else the Child must be unavoidably baptized again. The *Matter* and *Form* are so essential, that there is no true Baptism without them.

The *sixth* Question to the People who bring the Child to Church, after it has been thus baptized in private, is—*Whether they think the Child to be lawfully and perfectly baptized?* To which I suppose the Answer may well be, *Yes*.

Does it not therefore follow, both from the Question and the Answer, that a Child baptized by a *Lay-Person*, in due *Matter* and *Form*, is *lawfully* and *perfectly* baptized? Does it not follow, I say, from *Edward VI's Common-Prayer-Books*, that the *Church of England* then did so believe? I ask, at present, no more: But I think it will also follow clearly from hence, that *lawfully* and *perfectly*, were Words that did not then refer to the *Administrator* of Baptism, but to the *Matter* and *Form*, and Circumstantial Ceremonies of it. And, because I may have little Credit and Authority with the Reader, I must tell him, that in the Notes printed by Dr. *Nichols*, at the End of his *Common-Prayer* (to whose great Care and Pains I own my self very much obliged, and so I believe would others, if they would but read him) and which go under the Name of Dr. *Overal*, the Remark that is made upon the fourth, fifth, and sixth Questions, is this—*As the fourth and fifth Questions refer to the Substance of Baptism, so the sixth and last refers to the due Ceremonies and Circumstances that are to be used therein, and to be supplied in the Church, if through haste they were omitted at home.* And if the Author of the *Invalidity of Lay-Baptism*, had better considered these things, he would have seen that this *sixth* Question was not quite so slight and needless as he makes it. He would have known, it may be, that *perfectly* was applied to the *Matter* and *Form*; and *lawfully* applied to the other Particulars required by the Law, in the *Rubrics*. And I think he would not have made the following Conclusion, as he does in Page 112. “And therefore it is no wonder that the Church of *England*, upon a more exact Review of her Liturgy, expunged this Question (*i. e.* the sixth) out of the Rubric, and also for very weighty Reasons took away the Liberty of Lay-Baptizing in her present Liturgy, by requiring even in Cases of Necessity, that Baptism should be administered by the Minister of the Parish, or any other lawful Minister that can be procured. Which is a substantial Answer to all Objections that may be raised from her (*i. e.* the Church of *England's*) former Practice.”

I set down this out of the Book, Page 112, which is also agreed to, as a good Conclusion, by the Dr. in his Letter to him, Page 25.

The Church did certainly leave out the sixth Question, but certainly not for the Reason assigned by these Writers, but probably, because she saw there was no Necessity for it, and not for any Mischief it did. She also left out the third Question, but neither these Writers nor I know *why*; but so it was, and I doubt not but for some good Reason or other. And, whether the Church did truly take away the Liberty of *Lay-Baptizing* in her present Liturgy, by requiring even in Cases of Necessity, that Baptism should be administered by the Minister of the Parish, or any other lawful Minister that can be procured—Whether the Church hath done this or not—I am now come to consider. The Period of Time assigned for this Change and Reformation of the Rubric, is 1603, the 1st of King *James I.* in the Conference at *Hampton-Court*.

But before I come to it, I desire the Reader to remember, that I have been in Possession of my Point, from the Year 1548 to 1603, which is fifty-five Years. Which take in the Reigns of *Edward VI.*, *Queen Mary*, and *Queen Elizabeth*. In all this Time,



Time, *the Church of England* (whether Protestant or Popish) did never by any Publick Act of hers, make or declare *Lay-Baptism* to be *invalid*. Now I go on, to see whether she has condemned her former Practice or not.

As for the Account of the *Conference* held at *Hampton-Court*, between the *Bishops* and some of the *Puritanical Ministers*, before King *James I.* and all the *Privy-Council*; I must at present be obliged to Mr. *Fuller* for it, in his *Church History. Cent. XVII. Book IX. Page 8.* The *Conference* began *January 14. 1603.*

“ *Private Baptism* (says the King in his Speech) is the third thing, wherein I would be satisfied, in the *Common-Prayer*. If called *Private* from the *Place*, I think it agreeable to the use of the *Primitive Church*; but if termed *Private*, that any, besides a *lawful Minister*, may baptize, I utterly dislike it.” [And here (says the Historian) His Majesty grew somewhat earnest in his Expressions against the Baptizing by *Women* and *Laicks*.] Page 9.

“ *Archbishop of Canterbury, Whitgift.*

“ To the Point of *Private Baptism*, the Administration thereof by *Women* and *Lay-Persons*, is not allowed in the Practice of the Church, but enquired of and censured by Bishops in their *Visitations*.”

King *James*.

“ The Words of the Book, (*i. e.* the *Common-Prayer*) cannot but intend a Permission of *Women* and private *Persons* to baptize.”

Bishop of *Worcester, Babington*.

“ The doubtful Words may be pressed to that Meaning; yet the Compilers of the Book did not so intend them, as appeareth by their contrary Practice. But they propounded them ambiguously, because otherwise, perhaps, the Book would not then have passed the Parliament.”

To this he cited the Testimony of the *A. B.* of *York*.

Bishop of *London, Bancroft*.

“ Those Reverend Men intended not, by ambiguous Terms, to deceive any; but thereby intended a Permission of *private Persons* to baptize, in *Case of Necessity*. This is agreeable to the Practice of the Antient Church. Acts ii. when three Thousand being Baptized in a Day, (which for the Apostles alone to do, was at the least improbable) some being neither *Priests* nor *Bishops*, must be presumed employed therein. And some *Fathers* are of the same Opinion.” [Here he spake much and earnestly of the *Necessity of Baptism*.]

Here he produced Letters of some of those first Compilers.

King *James*.

“ That in the *Acts* was an *Act extraordinary*, and done before a Church was settled and grounded; wherefore no sound Reasoning thence to a Church established and flourishing. I maintain the *Necessity of Baptism*, and always thought the Place, *John iii. 5. Except one be Born again of Water, &c.* was meant thereof.

“ It may seem strange to you, my Lords, that I think you in *England* give too much to Baptism, seeing, fourteen Months ago in *Scotland*, I argued with my *Divines* there, for attributing too little unto it: Infomuch that a pert Minister asked me, if I thought Baptism so Necessary, that, if omitted, the Child should be damned? I answered, No, but if you called to baptize a Child, though privately, refuse to come, I think you shall be damned.

“ But this *Necessity of Baptism* I so understand, that it is necessary to be had, if lawfully to be had, that is, ministred by *lawful Ministers*, by whom alone, and no private Person, in any Case, it may be administred. Though I utterly dislike all *Rebaptization* on those whom *Women* or *Laicks* have baptized.”

Bishop of *Winton, Bilson*.



“ To deny private Persons to baptize, in Case of Necessity, were to cross all Antiquity, and the common Practice of the Church; it being a Rule agreed on, amongst Divines, that *the Minister is not of the Essence of the Sacrament.*”  
King James.

“ Though he be not of the Essence of the Sacrament, yet is he of the Essence of the right and lawful Minister thereof, according to *Christ's* Commission to his Disciples—  
“ *Go, Preach and Baptize, &c.*

“ The Result was this, to consult, whether in the *Rubric of private Baptism*, which leaves it indifferently to *All*, these Words, *Curate*, or *lawful Minister* may not be inserted.”

This is all that is left us of this *Conference*, with Relation to the Point in hand; and according to this Result, the *Rubric* was mended, and the Words *lawful Minister* were inserted. But before I set done these Changes, I desire I may make a few Remarks on what passed in this part of the *Conference*.

I. From what Archbishop *Whitgift* says, it should seem that Baptism by *Lay-Persons* or *Women*, was not so allowed, as that it should be thought an indifferent thing whether a Child were baptized by a Lay-Person, or a lawful Minister. He says the Bishops in their Visitations *inquired* after such Baptisms, and *censured them*. I make no doubt but what this Excellent Archbishop affirmed, was literally true. The Bishops might censure both the *Baptism* and the *Baptizers*, of this sort. But does the Archbishop say, that such Baptisms were *invalid*? Did the Bishops then give Order to have such Children as had been baptized by *Women*, or *Lay-Persons*, baptized again, by a *lawful Minister*?

The good Archbishop had a Mind to say, that the Common-Prayer-Book did not so much as *permit Women*, or *Lay-Persons*, to baptize. But the King (and I think with great Reason) was persuaded of the Contrary, and therefore would have it mended.

II. Bishop *Babington*, who had been the Archbishop's Pupil, would not, after what the King had said, affirm that the Book did not intend to permit *Lay-Baptisms*, but that (however ambiguous the Words might be) the practice of the Bishops was, not to permit them; but to inquire after them, and censure them. But still this does not shew that he intended to say such censurable, and censured Baptisms, were *invalid*.

III. Dr. *Bancroft* the Bishop of *London*, though he saw, by the King's earnest way of speaking, to which side of the Question he inclined; yet very honestly and frankly defended the *first Reformers*; tells the King what they certainly intended, namely to permit *private Persons* to baptize; and the Reason withal why they intended this Permission, namely, because it was the Practice of the Antient Church, &c. And his speaking so much and earnestly of the *Necessity of Baptism*, is a plain Proof of his Judgment in the Matter, and of his Approbation of private Persons Baptizing; because the Practice of the Antient Church was indeed founded on their Opinion of *the necessity* of Baptism in order to Salvation. This Bishop succeeded Dr. *Whitgift* in the See of *Canterbury* (who died about six Weeks after, on Feb. 29. 1603) and was principally concerned in altering the *Rubric*, and putting in the Words *lawful Minister*. And yet I hope I may reasonably presume; that, although a *lawful Minister* be the proper and only allowed, only required, Administrator of Baptism, yet the Archbishop did not so far change his Mind, as to judge all Baptisms not administered by a *lawful Minister*, to be *invalid*. But of this, more by and by.

IV. I must leave it to the Reader to judge, how satisfactory the King's Answer is to what the Bishop of *London* said, and indeed how consistent it is with it self. His Majesty declares that he maintains the *Necessity of Baptism*, and that he always thought the Place of St. *John* iii. 5. to be meant thereof; but then he is pleased to say, that he only means it to be *necessary*, where it can be had at the Hands of a *lawful Minister*; and that



that no *private Person* may administer Baptism, though in a Case of the extreamest Necessity. By which it should seem, that his Majesty put the Necessity of *Baptism* upon the same foot, with the Necessity of Receiving the other Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*; which few People have ever judged so necessary to be received, as to call for it, or take it from an improper, unauthorized, unconsecrated Hand; no not even those who believed that Infants (upon the Peril of their Souls) were to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper. The Necessity of Baptism maintained by the King, is so little urgent, that he thinks the Infant may as well die *unbaptized*, as baptized by an *unlawful* Hand. My Undertaking does not oblige me to dispute against the King's Opinion (which is contrary to that of the antient Church) but to shew what I think it was. But mark the Inconsistency of it. He is utterly against *Re-baptizing* such as had been before baptized by *Laicks*. But is not this to allow their Baptism to be valid? And is it as well for a Child to die *unbaptized*, as baptized by a *Laick*, whose Baptism must not be reiterated? If Lay-Baptism be invalid, how can it possibly consist with the Belief of the Necessity of Baptism, to deny the Re-baptizing Infants so baptized? Men may make *Premises* if they will, but *Consequences* make themselves. If Baptism be absolutely necessary from a *lawful* Hand, and a *Lay-hand* be not a lawful Hand, then *Lay-Baptism* is not the Baptism that is absolutely necessary: It must therefore be had from a Hand that is *lawful*. If therefore the King will not, by any means, allow of *Rebaptizing* such as were baptized by *Lay-hands*, other Folks will infer, for him, either that such Baptism is *valid*, or that Baptism is not absolutely necessary. Thus far, however, the King is clear in, that such as were baptized by *Laicks*, must not be *re-baptized*: And therefore the *Rubric* (as far as the King is concerned in it) that makes the Administrator of Baptism to be a *lawful Minister* only, does not necessarily infer the *Re-baptizing* of such as were not baptized by a lawful Minister. I shall only add, in this place, that the *Ministers* whom King *James* mentions, and whom he calls *his Divines*, were *Presbyterians*, and of *Presbyterian Ordination*: And therefore their Baptism was, according to the modern Dialect, but *Lay-Baptism*. But King *James* did neither think so, nor say so.

V. Bishop *Bilson* is intirely of the same Opinion with Bishop *Bancroft*, and says it is a Rule agreed on amongst Divines, that the *Minister is not of the Essence of the Sacrament*, i. e. that if Baptism be conferred in the *Matter* and *Form* prescribed by *Christ*, it is effectual to all the Purposes of Baptism, let what Christian soever confer, or administer it.

To this the King replies, that though the Minister be not of the Essence of the Sacrament, yet he is of the Essence of the right and lawful Ministry thereof, according to *Christ's* Commission—*Go, preach and baptize, &c.* i. e. if I rightly understand it, that the Sacrament of Baptism cannot be rightly and lawfully administered, without a Minister commissioned by *Christ* to do it. Which is what his Majesty had said before, in Substance, to the Bishop of *London*.

No one can possibly imagine, that these two learned Bishops did not very well know, that those whom *Christ* commissions and sends to baptize, are the only Right and Lawful Administrators of Baptism; and that when such can be had, none else should undertake to baptize. But the Question now in hand was, whether Baptism was not so necessarily to be had, that, rather than the Child should die without it, it might be administered by One who was not commissioned to do it, nor consequently had Authority given him to do it: And whether, when it was once administered and conferred by this unauthorized Hand, it was so valid as not to be repeated or reiterated again? This was the Question. The King was for having the Child baptized by none but by a lawful Commissioner: But in Case it had been baptized already by an uncommissioned Hand, he utterly disliked the Re-baptizing such a Child. The Bishops (with the best Antiquity)



Antiquity) maintained, that the Necessity of the Case made the Administrator of Baptism (though in all Respects besides an unlawful Hand) a lawful Minister, in this Performance; and were not for Re-baptizing any one who had been seriously baptized by any Christian with Water, and in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And thus the Matter stood between them.

These Remarks I thought might be for the Reader's Service, before he comes to consider the Changes made in the *Rubric*. And though he may easily perceive, that I am with the Bishops, against the King, in this Matter; yet I could not but think it fair, to let him see, that the *Rubric* was amended and changed according to the King's Pleasure; and that instead of that general, indetermined Expression of *One of them*, the Words *lawful Minister* were inserted, as they now stand.

After this manner then the *Rubric* was changed in 1604.

1604. "First, let the *lawful Minister* and them that be present, call upon God for his Grace, and say the Lords-Prayer, if the Time will suffer: And then the Child being named by some one that is present, the said *lawful Minister* shall dip it in Water, or pour Water upon it, saying these Words, *N. I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*"

1661. [In the Review of the Common-Prayer in 1661, this *Rubric* was thus changed, and now stands—, "First, let the *Minister of the Parish*, or in his Absence, any other *lawful Minister* that can be procured, with them that are present, call upon God and say the Lords-Prayer, and so many of the Collects appointed to be said before in the *Form of Publick Baptism*, as the Time and present Exigence will suffer. And then the Child being named by some one that is present, the Minister shall pour Water upon it, saying these Words, *N. I baptize thee, &c.*]

1604. "And let them not doubt but that the Child so baptized, is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again. *But* yet nevertheless, if the Child which is after this sort baptized, do afterward live, it is expedient that it be brought into the Church, to the Intent that if the *Priest* or Minister of the same Parish did himself baptize that Child, the Congregation may be certified of the true Form of Baptism, by him privately before used.

1661. [The *Rubric* is the same with the foregoing one, only the Words *But* and *Priest* are left out; and after the Words *before used* is added,——"In which Case he shall say thus,—I certify you, that according to the due and prescribed Order of the Church, *at such a time*, and *at such a place*, before divers Witnesses, I baptized this Child.]

1604, and 1661. "Or if this Child were baptized by another lawful Minister, that then the Minister of the Parish, where the Child was born or Christened, shall examine and try, whether the Child be lawfully baptized or no.

"In which Case, if those who bring any Child to the Church, do answer that the same Child is already baptized; then shall the Minister examine them farther, saying,

1. "By whom was this Child baptized?"

2. "Who was present when this Child was baptized?"

"Because some things *essential* to this Sacrament, may happen to be omitted through Fear, or Haste, in such Times of Extremity; therefore I demand farther of you,

3. "With what *Matter* was this Child baptized?"

4. "With what *Words* was this Child baptized?"

The first thing I would observe to the Reader, upon these Changes of the *Rubric*, is, that they were made by the King's sole Authority and Command. They had neither *Act of Parliament*, nor *Act of Convocation*, to countenance them. This was a Stretch of Power, but because it troubled no Body, it was easily submitted to. However, though



though the Alterations were very reasonable and good, yet they were not *legal*, till made so by the Legislative Power in 1661.

But, *Secondly*, taking them, as they now are, to be both good and obligatory, the Question is, Whether the Church of *England* does hereby declare, that *Lay-Baptism* is invalid? To which I reply,

1. The Church of *England* does certainly call for, and require a lawful Minister to be the Administrator of Baptism.
2. The Church of *England* does certainly (at least since 1661 or 1662) by a lawful Minister, mean and intend a Minister *Episcopally* ordained.
3. The Church of *England* neither allows, nor permits, any other than such as are *Episcopally* ordained, to administer Baptism.
4. The Church of *England* does hereby (implicitly at least) forbid any other than those of *Episcopal* Ordination, to baptize.
5. The Church of *England* inquires after, censures, and punishes (where she can) such as administer Baptism, if they are not qualified lawfully to do it.

But after all, I must own, that I do not think the Church of *England* does, by any, or all these *Rubrics*, intend to make or declare *Lay-Baptism* to be invalid. She calls for none but lawful Ministers; it is true; all Churches in the World do the same thing; it is not to be expected they should do otherwise. She does, by her *Rubrics*, allow or permit no other; that is also certain; Can any Church, by a *Rule*, allow a thing she thinks irregular? Even the *Rubric* of King *Edward's Book*, was so worded, as to leave it disputable and doubtful whether the Church allowed or intended to allow of *Lay-Baptism*, in Cases of Necessity; insomuch that Archbishop *Whitgift* and Bishop *Babington* contended, that it did not permit such *Lay-Baptism*. And much less can it be expected that a *Rubric*, that was changed on purpose to remove such doubt, should permit or allow of *Lay-Baptism*. But none of these things do either in themselves nullify and invalidate *Lay-Baptism*, or signify that the Church does look upon it as invalid, when once it is administered or conferred by a *Lay-Hand*. For if it did, it would certainly and expressly order such Children to be *re-baptized*. Why should it not, since it maintains the Necessity of Baptism, where it can be had? The Church of *Rome*, in all the *Rubrics* of its *Form of Baptism*, supposes the Administrator of that Sacrament to be always a proper and an authorized Person: It says in every Place, that the *Priest* is to do so and so, and the *Priest* is to say thus and thus; and in none of its *publick Forms* does it allow or permit any other to officiate: And yet we know the Doctrine of that Church allows and approves of *Lay-Baptism*. We know that, in Fact, when a *Priest* is not present, that it allows a *Deacon* to baptize; when a *Deacon* is not to be had, it allows a *Subdeacon* (which is as much in holy Orders as a Waterman upon the *Thames*) to baptize; when a *Subdeacon* is not present, it allows a *Lay-Man* to baptize; when a *Lay-Man* is not there, it allows a *Woman* to do it; nay, if a *Lay-Man* be utterly ignorant of the *Form*, or *Words*, it allows the *Midwife* before him, to baptize the Child. This we know is the Doctrine, this we know is the Practice of the Church of *Rome*; and yet in all the *Rubrics* of its *Office of Baptism*, it only mentions the *Priest*, the *Sacerdos*; and it tells us in none of them, that it permits or allows of any other but a *Sacerdos*. Who can expect it should? it is not a proper Place for it. And therefore I do not by any Means think it a conclusive way of arguing, to say the Church of *England* has, by its *Rubrics*, invalidated *Lay-Baptism*, because, by its *Rubrics*, it requires only a lawful Minister to baptize, and forbids all others to baptize, and blames, and condemns, and punishes such as baptize, who are not lawfully qualified to do so. This only signifies that she would not have it done; but it does not signify, that it is not effectually done, when it is actually done. For if it did, she must order it to be done again, if she judged it absolutely necessary to be done at all. I do not pretend to enter



into the Merits of the Cause, nor to dispute whether Lay-Baptism be valid, or invalid; nor whether it be lawful or unlawful to re-baptize such as have been baptized by Lay-Hands. This is not at present my Undertaking: But my Aim is to shew, that the Church of *England* has not, by these *Rubrics*, declared Lay-Baptism to be invalid; or, (in other Words) that a lawful Minister is so essential to the Validity of Baptism, that Baptism administered by a Lay-Hand is null and void. Nay, I am going about to try to shew the Reader, that the Church of *England* hath, in these very *Rubrics*, declared her Judgment to be, That (in the Words of Bishop *Bilson*) *the Minister is not of the Essence of the Sacrament*.

The Way I take to do it is this.

When the Child that was privately baptized, is brought to the Church, in order to have the rest of the Ceremonies and Service performed and compleated, although it were baptized before, by a *lawful Minister*, yet is the Minister of the Parish, for his own Satisfaction and that of the Congregation, to ask these following Questions.

1. *By whom* was this Child baptized?
2. *Who was present* when this Child was baptized?

The Minister of the Parish is to know who was the *Administrator*, and who were *Witnesses* to the Baptism administered: He could not otherwise be assured the Child had been baptized. Now because these Questions are asked, in this place, as well as the two following ones, concerning the *Matter* and *Form*, it is concluded by some, that the Church of *England* looks upon the *lawful Minister* to be as *essential* to Baptism, as the *Water* and the *Words*. But if she does, how comes she to place so notable and distinguishing a Clause, betwixt the two first and the two last Questions, as this is;—

“Because some things *essential* to this Sacrament may happen to be omitted through Fear, or Haste, in such Times of Extremity, therefore I demand farther of you,

3. “With what *Matter* was this Child baptized?

4. “With what *Words* was this Child baptized?”

Can any one read this Clause, thus inserted in the Middle of (and as if it were to part) these Questions, and believe the Church of *England* thought the *Administrator* and the *Witnesses* as *essential* as the *Matter* and the *Words*, to the conferring Baptism? Had the Church believed a lawful Minister to be as *essential* to the making a Baptism *valid*, as she did the *Matter* and the *Words*—she must and she would have said thus—

“Because some things *essential* to this Sacrament may have been neglected or omitted, through Haste, or Fear, I must ask you—*By whom* was this Child baptized, with what *Matter*, and what *Words* was it baptized,” &c. *i. e.* was it baptized by a *lawful Minister*, and with the *Matter* and *Words* prescribed by *Christ*? But, to ask first—*by whom*? And secondly—*before whom*? And then to suspect something *essential* to Baptism might have been omitted, and to mention those *Essentials* in the third and fourth Questions, is, in my Opinion, to intimate that the two first Questions did not contain things *Essential* to Baptism. And that it may appear what Reason I have to think so, I desire the Reader to consider the following Rubric, which is the last in the Office of *private Baptism*—

“But if they which bring the Infant to the Church, do make such uncertain Answers to the Priest’s Questions, as that it cannot appear that the Child was baptized with *Water*, *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, (which are *essential Parts* of Baptism) then let the Priest baptize it, in the Form before appointed for publick Baptism of Infants, saving that at the dipping the Child in the Font, he shall use this Form of Words—*If thou art not already baptized, N. I baptize thee, &c.*”

Why does not the Church say here, *if it cannot appear that the Child was baptized by a lawful Minister*, let it be conditionally baptized? Why does not the Church here tell



tell us (and could there be a fitter place to tell us?) that a *lawful Minister* is *essential* to a valid Baptism? When it is reckoning up the essential Parts of Baptism, could it forget the *Minister*, if that were also an essential Part? I am persuaded it neither could, nor would. And I therefore think I have proved, that, in the Judgment of the Church of *England* (what the Bishop of *Winchester* affirmed was a Rule agreed on amongst Divines) *The Minister is not of the Essence of the Sacrament of Baptism.*

And thus I have gone through all the *Offices of Baptism*, and the *Rubrics* that relate to this Matter; and having considered them with all the Care and Impartiality I could, I do not find that the Church of *England* hath, in any of them, declared Lay-Baptism to be invalid; and yet *they* are the *Places*, and the *publick Acts*, where one would look for and expect such Declaration, the most properly.

II. PROOF. The *second Proof* of the general Proposition, is fetched from the Silence of the Church of *England* in this Particular. She hath in no publick Act of hers, ordered such as have been baptized by Lay-Hands, to be *re-baptized* by a lawful Minister. I have already had Occasion to make this Observation in another place before. But it is, indeed, a clear and distinct Proof of the Judgment of the Church in this Matter. Had she been of the Mind, that Lay-Baptism was null, invalid, and ineffectual, her Care and Tenderneſs for all the People of this Kingdom, would have obliged her to command the Re-baptizing by lawful Ministers, all such as had not had a valid Baptism, if they could be brought to it. But she has no where intimated, no where suggested, much less expressed, or plainly signified, any such Purpose, or Design to have it done. If it be said, that from 1604 to 1661, the Church had either no *Occasion*, or *Opportunity*, of declaring her Judgment in this Point; yet all the World will acknowledge she had *both*, in a great degree, at the Time of the *Restoration* of King *Charles II.* when she might very reasonably suppose there were, in *England* and *Wales*, no fewer than two or three hundred thousand Souls, baptized by such hands as are now called *Lay-Hands*, and were then esteemed and held *unlawful* and un-authorized Hands. May we not fairly enough compute, that Six Parts in Ten, of all the People of the Kingdom, who were fourteen or fifteen Years Old, when King *Charles II.* returned to his Throne, had been baptized by such as the Church will not acknowledge for *lawful Ministers*? And what was there done with all this Number? What Care was taken by the Church to secure their Christianity? If the Church accounted them already to be validly baptized, the Question is given up. If she accounted their Baptism to be invalid, what Provision was there made, to have them *re-baptized*? I answer, None at all. And I say so with the greater Assurance, because I see that Dr. *Hicks*, though very able, and keenly edged to this purpose, hath not been so lucky as to produce one good Reason to make us believe, that the *Office of Ministration of Baptism to such as are of riper Years*, was intended for such as had been *invalidly baptized* by *unlawful Ministers*; although he thinks he has Reason to say it was. He does not, I own, affirm it, in any peremptory, magisterial Manner: But because he says it at all, and because his Authority (even in Matters of Conjecture) is much greater with those for whose sake I take these Pains, than I could wish it were, in Matters where I think he is much mistaken; because of this, I say, it lies upon me, to consider what he has said upon this Point.

Thus then the Doctor speaks in his *Letter* to the Author of the *Invalidity of Lay-Baptism*, p. 21.

“ You have well observed, *That our Church hath provided no Office of Confirmation*  
“ for those who receive Baptism from *Lay-Baptizers*. And indeed it would have been  
“ strange, that she which allows of no Baptism but by a *lawful Minister*, should have  
“ provided such an Office to confirm or ratify the Baptism of those, who (truly speaking) were *sprinkled* or *washed*, but not *baptized*. But I think you might, with Reason  
“ son



“son enough, have farther observed, that *she* hath provided an Office for their true and lawful Baptism. I mean, Sir, *The Ministration of Baptism to such as are of riper Years*. This new Office was made presently after the *Restoration*, and is part of the *Liturgy* that now is confirmed by Act of Parliament: And I do not think it was intended only for *Heathens, Jews, and Mahometans*, who should be converted to Christianity, or for such converted Hereticks among us as reject Baptism; but also for those who had been *invalidly baptized*; of which there were great Numbers at the Time of the *Restoration*, and now alas, are many more. I submit this Observation to your Thoughts, and the Consideration of all who shall read it: And if my Opinion, as to this Office, is wrong, I hope my Error is pardonable, because it is not hurtful to the Church, nor casts the least Dishonour upon her learned and pious Bishops and Priests her Representatives, who made that Office, which before was wanting.”

The Remarks I would make upon this Passage, are these:

1. I desire the Doctor and his *Friend*, to make a little Inquiry into the Matter of Fact, and to examine, whether the Bishops after the *Restoration* in 1660, did not go about their several *Dioceses*, and confirm many Thousands of such as had been baptized by *unlawful Ministers*, and not by the Form in the *Common-Prayer*? And whether they made, or tried to make, any Distinction between such young People, as had been baptized by *Orthodox Ministers*, and such as had been baptized by Men who were not *Episcopally ordained*? Did they declare or intimate that such as had been baptized by the *latter*, were not baptized *lawfully*, and therefore could not be confirmed? Did they reject any one on this account? Or did they use any other Office of Confirmation, than the present one, to confirm all that were brought to them? I verily think, that upon Enquiry, it will be found, that not a single Bishop in the Kingdom, did then refuse to confirm any one, upon Pretence of their not being *lawfully baptized*, by a *lawful Minister*. Let the Doctor and his *Friend* then consider, whether this Practice of the Bishops at that Time, be not an implicit Declaration of their Judgment, *First*, That there was no need of a new Office of Confirmation, for such as had been baptized by Lay-Baptizers; and *Secondly*, That such as they confirmed, were held by them to have been validly baptized. If a Bishop shall confirm a Thousand People, who (he knows, or might know) had been baptized by one that was not Episcopally ordained, with the *same Words and Ceremonies*, with which he confirms another Thousand People who had been baptized by an Episcopal Minister; will not every one conclude, that this Bishop thinks the Baptism of both these Thousands to be equally and alike *valid*, though neither *regularly*, nor *orderly*, nor *lawfully* at first conferred? Now whether this was not the Practice of the Bishops at that Time, I leave to the Doctor and his Followers to inquire, remember, and consider.

2. I agree with the Doctor, that it would have been a strange thing for the *Convocation* (had they been of his Mind) to have made a new Office of Confirmation for such as had been baptized by *Lay-Baptizers*. It had certainly been very absurd to confirm such People, as they thought had never been *validly* baptized. But is not the Conclusion as good on the other hand, that such as *were confirmed* by the *old Office*, must needs be thought to be *validly* baptized, by such as confirmed them? *A. B.* was baptized in 1650, by a Minister of the *Presbyterian Ordination*; and *A. B.* was confirmed in 1662, by a Bishop of the Church of *England*, according to the *Office* appointed for that Purpose. Will not most People conclude, from hence, that the Bishop held the Baptism of *A. B.* to be *valid*? This I think is as plain, as if it were deduced from *Definitions, Axioms, and Propositions, &c.*

3. As to what the Doctor says, That he thinks the Church hath provided an Office for the true and lawful Baptism of such as had been invalidly baptized, it is very much to



to the Purpose, if he can make it good. It would utterly subvert the Objection that is in every body's Mouth, *viz.* That had the Church held the Baptism of *unlawful Ministers* (*i. e.* such as were not ordained by Episcopal Hands, and are consequently held as mere *Laicks*) to be null and *invalid*, she must and would have ordered all such People to be *re-baptized* by lawful Ministers. To this the Doctor says, that the Church hath adjudged all such Baptisms to be *invalid*, and that such People were only *sprinkled* or *washed*, and not *baptized*, and hath provided a *new Office* for the true and lawful Baptism of them, namely,—the *Ministration of Baptism for such as are of riper Years*. This Office he says was intended for such as had been *invalidly baptized*, as well as for *Heathens, Jews, Turks and Hereticks*. When I first read this Passage, I could not forbear repeating to my self, *How hard a Saying is this?* And it was not without Concern, that I remembred it came from a Man, now venerable for his Years, as well as for his Virtue, and his Learning. But with what Reasons does he support this his Assertion, or Conjecture? Those he brings in this Place (as the Reader may see) are, that *this Office* was made *new* after the *Restoration*; and that, at *that Time*, there were many People who had been *invalidly baptized*. This Office was indeed *new*; but is it not rather to be wondred at, that there was not, long before this Time, a Form of Baptism for *adult Persons*, in a Church so well established as ours was? My Guess is, that in the Days of *Edward VI. Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, and King James*, and the greatest part of *King Charles I.* there were very few People in *England*, that expressed any dislike of *Infant-Baptism*; the Doctrine and the Custom was all in its Favour, and therefore there was no very visible need of a *Form* for baptizing People of *riper Years*. But in the Times of Civil War, and Anarchy, these wicked Tares grew up in great Plenty; and this part of *Anabaptism*, as well as the other of *Re-baptizing*, prevailed very much; so that betwixt the Years 1640 and 1660, there were a great many young People that had never been baptized at all; enow to justify the Wisdom of the Church in composing a *new Form*, that might serve for *them*, as well as all others whom the Doctor reckons up. This is but my Conjecture; but I dare say, the impartial Reader will incline to think, that the *Convocation*, which composed this *new Office*, had full as much Regard to *these* People, as to the *invalidly baptized*. The great Number of these last, is the *other Reason* which induces him to think that this new Office was intended for them. But, in my Opinion, this is taking the thing in Question, for granted. He supposes the Church to account all such as had been baptized by *unlawful Ministers*, to have been *invalidly baptized*: But has the Church made any such Declaration? I have been trying to prove (and I hope I have proved) that she has not. The Fundamental Mistake, I think, is this, that because the Church requires a *lawful Minister* to be the Administrator of Baptism, in her *Rubrics*; therefore she accounts all Baptisms not conferred by a lawful Minister, to be *null* and *invalid*. This is by no means a necessary Consequence: She has no where said so; and her Practice is clearly otherwise, as I have shewn, by the Bishops Confirmations in 1661 and since, and by her ordering none of them to be re-baptized. Which I still insist on, to be a good Proof, and which is not at all weakned by these two Reasons of the Doctor, of which I leave the Reader to judge. But it may be he is better provided, two or three Pages off; for there he resumes the same Argument, whether out of Confidence or Distrust of what was said before, I will not determine; but thus he says, *p. 24.*

“ Sir, From these Observations” [*viz.* that no new Office of Confirmation was provided for such as were baptized by *Laicks*; that the Office of Baptism for such as were of riper Years, was intended for such as had been *invalidly baptized*; that Baptism was absolutely necessary to Salvation, was an erroneous, though innocent and pious, Opinion; and that such happy Alterations had been made in the Liturgy] “ From these Observations, Sir, I think I may conclude, *First*, That the *absolute indispensable* Ne-



“ necessity of Baptism is not the Doctrine of the Church of *England*. Secondly, That she  
 “ approves of no Baptism, or thinks no Baptism duly and validly administered, but  
 “ what is ministered by duly authorized and lawful Ministers, and consequently that  
 “ she rejects all *Lay-Baptism*. Thirdly, That she cannot count those duly authorized  
 “ and lawful Ministers, who take upon them the Ministry, within the Pale of her Ju-  
 “ risdiction, in Contempt of, and Opposition to, her Episcopate, and Episcopal Mission,  
 “ or Power of Ordination; and by Consequence, that she must look upon Baptism ad-  
 “ ministered by such Ministers, as null and void, from the Beginning.

“ From these Conclusions, and the Consequences issuing from them, I have farther  
 “ Reason to think, that the Office of *the Ministration of Baptism to such as are of riper*  
 “ *Years*, was intended for Persons *invalidly baptized* by such *unlawful Ministers* among  
 “ us, as were never duly authorized, as well as for converted *Heathens, Jews, Malco-*  
 “ *metans*, and such modern *Manicheans*, and *Seleucians* among us, as held it unlawful  
 “ to baptize with the Baptism of the Church.”

As I take this Passage to be but a Repetition of what he had said before, a little en-  
 larged; so I acquaint my Reader, that I shall be constrained to repeat, in my Reply, a  
 great deal of what I have said before.

1. Whether it be an erroneous Opinion, That Baptism is absolutely necessary to Sal-  
 vation, is not proved by him, but affirmed. Whether the indispensable Necessity of  
 Baptism be the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, or be not, I am not able to deter-  
 mine, I acknowledge, with full Certainty. He who says that such an Opinion is errone-  
 ous, will say, among us, that it is not the Opinion of the Church of *England*: And  
 I, who incline to think it is the Opinion of the Church of *England*, do so far think it  
 not to be erroneous. And because I am persuaded that she does not hold *Lay-Baptism*  
 to be *invalid*, I am also so far persuaded that she holds Baptism to be indispensably  
 necessary, where it can possibly be had: She will have *Lay-Baptism*, in the want of a  
 lawful Minister, rather than none at all.

2. I must repeat again, that it does not necessarily follow, that the Church *rejects* all  
*Lay-Baptism*, or accounts all Baptism conferred by Men not Episcopally ordained, to  
 be *null and invalid*, because she does in all her Offices and Rubrics call for and require  
 a *lawful Minister* to confer Baptism. This, the Doctor knows, is not a certain Conse-  
 quence in the Church of *Rome*, which in her Office of Baptism requires a *Priest*,  
 a *Sacerdos* only, (*See before*, p. 525.) to administer that Sacrament. And I would ask  
 him, if he thinks that the Church of *England*, when she changed her Rubric in 1603,  
 from those indefinite Words—*Let one of them*—into—*a Lawful Minister*,  
 whether she did thereby intend to *invalidate* and utterly *annul* all Baptisms that had  
 been before conferred by *Lay-Hands*? or whether she baptized again, by a lawful Mi-  
 nister, such *Lay-baptized*? What if I should acquaint the Doctor, that in all the Of-  
 fices of Baptism, whether *Publick* or *Private*, that of *Infants*, or that of *adult* and  
 grown-up Persons, there is not so much as the Word *Deacon* to be found in them  
 throughout? And that both *Minister* and *Curate*, which are used in them, do signify  
 a *Priest*, and nothing but a *Priest*. This I assure him, is Matter of Fact, and exactly  
 true, as he will find upon Examination. Will he give me leave to conclude from hence,  
 that a *Deacon* may not baptize a Child, because he is not mentioned or required in  
 any of these Offices, or their Rubrics? He will, it may be, say, that a *Deacon*, when  
 he is ordained, has it in his Commission, *to baptize Infants in the Absence of the Priest*.  
 I know he has; but let him go to that Office, and see if the Administrator of Baptism  
 is not always to be a *Priest*, or *Minister*, or *Curate*, which, I say is but one and the  
 same Man, *viz.* a *Priest*: And let him reconcile the Rubric which calls for a *Priest*,  
 with his Commission of a *Deacon*, which allows him to baptize in the Priest's Absence.  
 I would not be thought to make this a parallel Case, it is not exactly so; but I would  
 make



make this Use of it, that to insist too rigidly upon the *Letter* of the *Rubric*, when the *customary Practice* of the Church allows of Relaxations and Abatements, is to be over-wise, or over-scrupulous. The Church, in all her Rules, and Orders, must call for and require, what she thinks best, and would most gladly have; but whilst she is made up of frail, imperfect Creatures, and subject to numberless Accidents, she must be content with the best Performances she can obtain. And, if she can secure the *Essentials* of Religion, will bear with the Want of many convenient and expedient *Circumstances*, till it pleases God to make her easy with them also. The Church, in her *Rubric*, calls for a *lawful Minister* to baptize the Child; and calls for no body else; and would gladly have no body else; but, in the Interim, another Person comes, called only by Necessity, or called perhaps through Fondness of the Parent, or through mistaken Judgment, but is by no means the Person called for and intended by the Church: However, he performs the Office, and baptizes the Child, in the same Element of Water, and with the same Words of *Christ*, who was the blessed Institutor of this Sacrament. The Church is offended at this Proceeding; censures, blames, condemns, and punishes, the Intruder and Usurper on the Holy Office (unless it were in a Case of pure Necessity.) But after all, she sees the Sacrament *essentially* administered, the *Matter* and the *Words* of *Christ* were seriously used, and though the Voice and Hand that administered, were both unhallowed, yet will she not *invalidate*, or *disannul* this Work. The Doctor very well knows this was the way of reasoning in the Antient Church; and (because I have proved it) I am bold to say it is the way of reasoning in the present Church of *England*. And as she never has, so I believe she never will depart from that good Standard, in this Particular. The Laws, with very good Reason, have appropriated the Coinage of all the Money current in the Kingdom, to the *Prince*; and they have made it highly criminal for any Man else but such as are substituted and appointed by proper Officers, under the Regulation of the Crown, to have any Hand in the work of Coining: And the numberless Mischiefs that would ensue upon permitting every private Man to coin, if he could, do very well justify the restraining it to such and such elected and appointed Persons, and punishing, even with Death, all that transgress this Law, although the Pieces they coin should be of equal Weight and Fineness, with the *Standard*, and though the Image, Arms, and Superscription, should be as right and good, and to all appearance the same with those that were coined in the *Tower-Mint*, by the Queen's proper Officers. But yet these Pieces would be *current* still, the Prince would not *re-coin* them, nor would the People *refuse* them: because of their intrinsic Worth, and their external Form. The Hand that made them might be deservedly cut off, but the Piece is *essentially* good; the *Weight* and *Fineness*, *Head* and *Arms* demonstrate it to be so.

3. Although the Church should not count the *Dissenting Ministers*, to be duly authorized and *lawful* Ministers, yet she need not, of *Consequence*, look upon Baptism administered by them, as *null* and *void* from the Beginning. This is begging the thing in Question, and not proving it. The Church may (though I do not take upon me to say she *does*, but supposing she *may*) count all the other Parts of the Ministration that are performed by Dissenting Ministers, to be null and void; yet it would not necessarily follow, that she should therefore count their *Baptisms* to be null and void. This is the single thing contended for. Abundance of People, I doubt, are easily led to think their Baptisms to be *invalid*, because they think if their Baptisms be allowed, the rest of their Ministerial Performances must be also valid. But this was held to be no Consequence by the Antient Church of Christ; nor is it a Consequence held by the Church of *England*. It is *Baptism alone* that is not invalidated and made null, though conferred by an unlawful Minister, or a meer Lay-Christian. And therefore a hundred Passages cited either from the Antient or Modern Writers, to nullify and invalidate all the Ministerial Performances



Performances of unconsecrated and unlawful Ministers, are insignificant to the Point in Hand, unless they say expressly that *Baptism* administered by such is *invalid*; which I dare say they will never be able to produce, provided they mean Baptism administered in the *Matter* and *Form* prescribed by *Christ*.

Upon the whole Matter therefore, I cannot see, that the Observations the Doctor has made are right, nor the Conclusions he has drawn from them to be just and good; nor consequently can I find he has any manner of Reason to think, that *the Office of the Ministration of Baptism to such as be of riper Years*, was made and intended for such as had been *invalidly baptized*, by *unlawful Ministers*. And therefore I am still of the Opinion, that *the Church of England hath by no Act of hers, made or declared Lay-Baptism to be invalid.*

III. PROOF. And I will add but one Argument more, in Proof of this Position, and that shall be also fetched from the Silence of the *Preachers* and the *Writers* of the Church of *England* in this Point, from the Year 1660 till the Year 1700.

Did any of my Lords the Bishops in their *primary Visitations*, after the *Restoration* of King *Charles II* (the properest Season certainly) give it in Charge to their Clergy, to inform their People, either by Preaching, or Writing, that such as had been baptized by unlawful Nonconforming, *unepiscopal*, Ministers, were not *Christians*, having not been *validly Baptized*, and therefore that all such must be baptized anew? Does any one remember such Instructions given about that Time, or since? Did the Writers of Controversy who were many, and for many Years, among other Points debated, did they, I say, insist on the *Invalidity* of the Dissenters Baptism, in any of their Books? Did the *London*—or the *Country Ministers*, who were the most zealous to bring their People to Conformity, and a good liking of the Church-way, and to rescue them from Schism and Separation, and the Mischiefs of it, did they begin with this, that they must consider they were not *Christians*, and wanted *true Baptism*? Does any one call to Mind, that any such Arguments as these were used to persuade their Flocks to enter into *Christ's Fold*, by the Gate of Baptism? Did they pretend to *convert* the Dissenters to *Christianity*? Or to *leave the Separation, and come over to the Church*? Is it not a very modern Thing, is it not of Yesterday, to hear it said, that *the Dissenters are not Christians*, having been baptized with Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? And yet, will any reasonable Man tell us, that it was not the Duty of the Bishops to have given these things in Charge to the Clergy? Will any one say, it was not the proper Business of the controversial Writers, to have insisted mainly on this great Point? Or could the Parish-Priests have done any thing better, more pleasing to God, or more useful to the People, than to have told them, they must *become Christians and be Baptized*? Was there an utter Neglect of this great Duty among all sorts of Parties concerned, at a Time when nothing could have been more proper? Who can easily come into this Belief? If this Silence of the Ecclesiastical Governours, of the Parish-Priests, and of the Writers of Controversy, be not a Proof of the Church of *England's* Judgment in the Matter; I must despair of knowing what can be one.

And thus I have gone through the little Work I undertook: Which was not to prove the Validity of Lay-Baptism; nor to prove the Baptism of Dissenters to be good and valid, in Opposition to the Author of *Lay-Baptism's Invalidity*, or in Opposition to Dr. *Hicks* his Abetter and Encourager; this was not my Design; but to make good my Position—*That the Church of England hath by no publick Act of hers, made or declared Lay-Baptism to be invalid.* Both those Writers had affirmed that the Church of *England* accounts Lay-Baptism, and the Baptism of Dissenting Ministers, to be *invalid*; as far as they affirm that, I have concerned my self with them, and no farther. But because I could not disprove their Allegations in this particular, without discovering my Opinion in the general, of the Matter in dispute, every Body will see I am of a very different



different Judgment from those Writers. The only thing I would leave with the Reader, is to consider, whether I have not made good my Position, from the particular Proofs I have brought; from the Consideration of the *Offices of Baptism* and their *Rubrics*; from the *Confirmations* of the Bishops after 1660; and from the *Silence* of the Clergy, and Church-Writers, for upwards of Forty Years, in a Matter wherein every Body will see they were highly concerned to have spoken. And if the Church of England has not declared *Lay-Baptism*, and *Dissenters Baptism*, to be *invalid*, I cannot choose but think it a very great Presumption for any private Member of her Communion, to do so. As for what the Author of the aforesaid Book, says of the 23<sup>d</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> *Articles*; he may know that those *Articles* were made in 1552 (as well as 1562) by many of the same People who made the Office of Baptism and Rubrics in 1548 and 1552: And that therefore the Allowance of Lay-Baptism, was not thought to clash, or be inconsistent with those *Articles*. But he may also know, that the Church, by requiring a *lawful Minister* to Baptism, does not, by necessary Consequence, invalidate a Baptism conferred by an *unlawful Minister*. The Reader will, I hope, be content, that, in Affirmance of my Position, I present him with some Citations, out of Mr. *Hooker*, and Mr. *Thorndike*; the one before, the other since the Change made in 1603.

## A P P E N D I X.

THE famous *Thomas Cartwright*, Lib. I. Pag. 143. saith "that private Baptism first rose upon a false Interpretation of St. *Job*. iii. 5. *Unless a Man be born again of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. Where certain do interpret the Word *Water*, for the material and elemental Water; whereas our Saviour *Christ* taketh Water there, by a borrowed Speech, for the *Spirit of God*, the Effect whereof it shadoweth out."

To this, Mr. *Richard Hooker*, Lib. v. §. 59. replies—

"To hide the general consent of Antiquity, agreeing in the literal Interpretation, they cunningly affirm, that certain have taken these Words, as meant of material Water; when they know that of all the *Antients* there is not one to be named, that ever did otherwise either expound or alledge that Place, than as implying external Baptism."

"*Tho. Cartwright*, Lib. I. 146. The Orders which God hath set are, that it should be done in the Congregation, and by the Minister. And I will further say, that although the Infants which dye without Baptism, should be assuredly damned (which is most false) yet ought not the Orders, which God hath set in his Church, be broken after this sort."

To this Mr. *Hooker* replies at large, Lib. V. §. 61. but I will only set down a few Lines.

"To acknowledge *Christ's* Institution to be the ground of both Sacraments, I suppose no Christian Man will refuse: For it giveth them their very Nature, it appointeth the Matter whereof they consist; the Form of their Administration it teacheth; and it blesteth them with that Grace, whereby they are to us, both Pledges and Instruments of Life. Nevertheless, seeing *Christ's* Institution containeth, besides that which maketh compleat the Essence or Nature, other things that are only Parts, as it were, of the Furniture of Sacraments; the difference between these two must unfold that which the general Terms of indefinite Speech would confound." [I assure the Reader, that Mr. *Hooker* was of Bishop *Bilson's* Mind, that the Minister was not of the Essence of Baptism.]



T. C. Lib. I. Page 144.

“ On this Point, whether *he be a Minister* or no, dependeth not only the *Dignity*,  
“ but the *Being* of the Sacrament. So that I take the Baptism of *Women*, to be no  
“ more the Holy Sacrament of Baptism, than any other daily or ordinary *washing* of  
“ the Child.”

Mr. *Hooker*, Lib. V. §. 62. which I desire the Reader to look carefully over, if he has the Book by him. I only transcribe some Parts of it, for the sake of those who have not. And little could any body have thought, that the Arguments which *Thomas Cartwright*, a principal *Puritan Minister*, produced above an hundred Years ago, against the *Doctrine, Practice, Service, and Ministers* of the Church of *England*, in the Point of *Lay-Baptism*; should now be again produced by Doctor *H—s*, and several Church of *England* Ministers, against the *Dissenting Ministers*, to prove their Baptism to be *Lay-Baptism*, and altogether *invalid, null, and void; sprinkling, and washing*, if you will, but not *baptizing* any one. And that, at the same time, the Arguments of Mr. *Hooker* should be produced to prove their Baptisms *valid*. But we have lived to see strange Things: And if these Humours may go on, and be received, encouraged, and applauded by the young Students and Divines, we may see stranger yet. But God forbid! Let this Digression be forgiven, and I go on.

Lib. V. §. 62. Page 231.

“ The Reason whereupon they ground their Opinion, *viz.* That Baptism by Wo-  
“ men is no more a Sacrament, than any other ordinary washing or bathing a Man's  
“ Body, is such, as making Baptism by Women void, because Women are no Mi-  
“ nisters in the Church of God, must needs generally Annihilate the Baptism of all un-  
“ to whom their Conceit shall apply this Exception, whether it be in regard of *Sex*, of  
“ Quality, of *Insufficiency*, or whatsoever. For if want of *calling* do frustrate Baptism,  
“ they that baptize without *calling*, do nothing, be they Women or Men.”

Page 232. “ To Womens Baptism in Private, by Occasion of urgent Necessity, the  
“ Reasons that only concern ordinary Baptisms in Publick, are no just prejudice: Nei-  
“ ther can we by force thereof disprove the Practice of those Churches, which (necessity  
“ requiring) allow Baptism in private, to be administered by Women. We may not  
“ from Laws that prohibit any thing with Restraint, conclude absolute and unlimited  
“ Prohibitions: Although we deny not but they which utterly forbid such Baptism,  
“ may have, perhaps, wherewith to justify their Orders against it. For, even things  
“ lawful are well prohibited, when there is fear lest they make the way to unlawful  
“ more easy. And, it may be, the liberty of Baptism at such Times by Women, doth  
“ sometimes embolden the rasher sort to do it, where no such necessity is. But whe-  
“ ther of Permission, *besides Law*, or in presumption *against Law*, they do it, is it  
“ thereby altogether *frustrate, void*, and as though it were never given? They which  
“ have not at the first, their right Baptism, must of necessity be *re-baptized*, because  
“ the Law of *Christ* tyeth all Men to receive Baptism. *Iteration* of Baptism once given,  
“ hath been always thought a manifest Contempt of that antient apostolick Aphorism,  
“ *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*: Baptism not only *One*, in as much as it hath every  
“ where the *same Substance*, and offereth unto all Men *the same Grace*; but *One* also,  
“ for that it ought not to be received by any one Man above *once*.” [This Argument  
he pursues in a convincing Manner; and goes on to give the History of Re-baptizing  
maintained by St. *Cyprian* and the *African Church*, whom he affirms to have been  
mistaken: And makes this wise Remark upon him—That *the Teacher's Error is the  
People's Trial, harder and heavier by so much to bear, as he is in Worth and Regard  
greater that misperfwadeth them*—And after a great deal said on this Head, worthy,  
every Line of it, to be thoughtfully perused by our new-fangled Ministers, he says]  
“ Since the Church of God hath always hitherto constantly maintained, that to re-  
“ baptize



baptize them which are known to have received true Baptism, is unlawful : That if  
 Baptism be seriously administred, in the same Element, and with the same Form of  
 Words, which *Christ's* Institution teacheth, there is no other Defect in the World  
 that can make it frustrate, or deprive it of the Nature of a true Sacrament : And  
 lastly, That Baptism is only then to be re-administred, when the first Delivery  
 thereof is void, in regard of the forealledged Imperfections, and no other : Shall we  
 now in the Case of Baptism, which having both for *Matter* and *Form*, the Substance  
 of *Christ's* Institution, is by a sort of Men voided for the only Defect of Ecclesiastical  
 Authority in the Minister ; shall we, I say, think it enough, that the Puritans blow  
 away the Force thereof, with the bare Strength of their very Breath, by saying—  
*We take such Baptisms to be no more the Sacrament of Baptism, than any other ordinary*  
*Bathing to be a Sacrament ?* It behoveth generally all Sorts of Men, to keep them-  
 selves within the Limits of their own Vocation. And seeing God, from whom Mens  
 several Degrees and Præeminencies do proceed, hath appointed them in his Church,  
 at whose Hands His Pleasure is, that we should receive both Baptism, and all other  
 publick medicinal Helps of Soul, perhaps thereby the more to settle our Hearts in the  
 Love of our Ghostly Superiours ; they have small Cause to hope, that with Him their  
 voluntary Services will be accepted, who thrust themselves into Functions, either above  
 their Capacity, or besides their Place, and overboldly intermeddle with Duties, where-  
 of no Charge was ever given them : They that in any thing exceed the Compass of  
 their own Order, do, as much as in them lieth, to dissolve that Order which is the  
 Harmony of God's Church. Suppose therefore, that in these and the like Consider-  
 ations, the Law did utterly prohibit Baptism to be administred by any other, than  
 Persons thereunto solemnly consecrated, what Necessity soever happen ; are not  
 many things *firm* being done, although, in Part, done otherwise than positive Rigor  
 and Strictness did require ? Nature, as much as is possible, inclineth unto *Validities*,  
 and Preservations : Dissolutions, and *Nullities* of things done, are not only not fa-  
 voured, but hated, when either urged without Cause, or extended beyond their  
 Reach. If therefore at any Time it come to pass, that in teaching publickly or pri-  
 vately, in delivering this blessed Sacrament of Regeneration, some un sanctified Hand,  
 contrary to *Christ's* supposed Ordinance, do intrude it self to execute that, whereunto  
 the Laws of God, and his Church hath deputed *others* ; which of these two Opini-  
 ons seemeth more agreeable with Equity, *Ours* [of the Church of *England*] that *dis-*  
*allow* what is done amiss, yet make not the *Force* of the Word and Sacraments, much  
 less their *Nature* and very *Substance*, to depend on the Minister's *Authority* and *Cal-*  
*ling* ; or else *Theirs* [the *Puritans* heretofore, but now *Dr. H—s*, and many  
 young Clergymen's] which defeat, disannul, and annihilate both, in Respect of that  
 one only personal Defect ; there being not any Law of God, which saith, that if the  
 Minister be incompetent, his Word shall be no Word, his Baptism no Baptism ?

And *p. 239* "The Grace of Baptism cometh, by Donation, from God alone : That  
 God hath committed the Ministry of Baptism unto special Men, it is for Order's sake  
 in his Church, and not to the end that their Authority might *give Being*, or *add*  
*Force* to the Sacrament it self. That Infants have right to the Sacrament in Baptism,  
 we all acknowledge. Charge them we cannot as guileful and wrongful Possessors of  
 that, whereunto they have Right by the manifest Will of the Donor, and are not  
 Parties unto any Defect or Disorder in the manner of receiving the same. And if any  
 such Disorder be, we have sufficiently before declared, that *Delictum cum Capite*  
*semper ambulat*, Mens own Faults are their own Harms."

And last of all. "Whereas general and full Consent of the godly-learned of all  
 Ages, doth make for Validity of Baptism ; yea, albeit administred in private, and  
 even by Women ; which kind of Baptism in Case of Necessity, divers Reformed  
 Churches



“ Churches do both allow and defend ; some others, which do not defend, tolerate :  
 “ Few, in Comparifon, and they without any juft Caufe, do utterly difannul and anni-  
 “ hilate : Surely however, through Defect on either fide, the Sacrament may be with-  
 “ out Fruit, as well in fome Cafes to him which receiveth, as to him which giveth it ;  
 “ yet no Difability of either part can fo far make it frustrate and without effect, as to  
 “ deprive it of the very Nature of true Baptifm, having all things elfe, which the Or-  
 “ dinance of *Chrift* requireth.”

Mr. *Thorndike* in his *Rights of the Church in a Chriftian State* ; in the Year 1649. p. 107. hath thefe Words.

“ If the Charge of Baptizing given the Apoftles, had been meant of the *Office of*  
 “ *Miniftring*, not of *the Power of granting it*, what Reason could there be, that  
 “ *St. Peter*, having converted *Cornelius* and his Company, fhould not baptize them in  
 “ Perfon, but command them to be baptized ? *Acts* x. 48.

“ And if the Apoftles employ their Deacon *St. Philip*, to preach and to baptize, is  
 “ it not by Confequence, that the Governours of particular Churches employ *their*  
 “ *Deacons* about the fame ? In the Synagogue it cannot be faid, that *the Office of Cir-*  
 “ *cumcifing* ever required any higher Quality than that of a Perfon circumcifed : And  
 “ therefore in the Church, if there can be any Queftion, whether a Perfon is to be  
 “ admitted to Baptifm or no, it is the chief Power of the Church that muft determine  
 “ it. Or if the Occafion require Solemnity, which may argue him that officiates it, to  
 “ be the Chief in the Church, no *Deacon* or *Presbyter* muft presume to do it before the  
 “ *Bifhop*. But becaufe Baptifm is the Gate, as well of the invifible Church, as of the  
 “ vifible : And becaufe the Occafions are many and divers which endanger the prevent-  
 “ ing of fo neceffary an Office by Death ; in this Regard the Practice of the Primi-  
 “ tive Church, alledged by *Tertullian De Bapt.* c. 18. muft not be condemned, where-  
 “ by Baptifm given by him that is *only baptized*, is not only *valid* but *well done*.”

Mr. *Thorndike* in his *Epilogue*, 1659. p. 150. Lib. III.

“ When the Power of Confirming, proper to the Bifhop, evidenceth, that he alone  
 “ *granteth* Baptifm (either by particular Appointment, or by general Law, in which  
 “ his Authority is involved) but a *Lay-man* fometimes may *minifter* it ; we fee what  
 “ *St. Paul* means when he fays, *1 Cor.* i. 17. *God ſent me not to baptize, but to preach*  
 “ *the Goſpel* : Our Lord having faid, *Matth.* xxviii. 19. *Go preach and make Difciples*  
 “ *of all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt* :  
 “ To wit, that the Power of *appointing* it, not the *Miniftry of doing* it, is proper to  
 “ the Apoftles and their Succeffors. Which Reason will hold in fundry Particulars,  
 “ concerning *Ordination*, concerning *Absolution* and *Penance*, concerning *Confirmation*  
 “ and others. In all which this being once ſecured, that no Man act beyond the  
 “ Power, which he receiveth, it will be no Prejudice to the Unity of the Church, that  
 “ ſome Orders do that, by particular Commiſſion from their Superiors, which their  
 “ Order inables not all that are of it, to do. Becaufe in ſuch Cafes, it is not *Authority*,  
 “ but *Miniftry* which they contribute.”

*Idem.* Lib. III. p. 67.

“ But a great many Witneſſes ſpeak not ſo much, as the *Law*, the *Rule*, the *Cuſ-*  
 “ *tom*, of giving Baptifm by *any Man that was a Chriftian* in that Caſe of Neceſſity,  
 “ (*i. e.* rather than any one ſhould die unbaptized) For, out of that Caſe of Neceſſity,  
 “ the Office of Baptizing belonged to the very higheſt in the Church ; to wit, ſo as  
 “ might ſtand with the more weighty Employments of their Office : For otherwiſe, a  
 “ little common Senſe would ſerve to inform them, that thoſe Offices which required  
 “ more of their Perſonal Knowledge, Skill, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, were to be pre-  
 “ ferred before the Office of Baptizing ; which, though it concerns Salvation, yet re-  
 “ quires no ſuch Qualities. Can any Man then imagine any Reason, why all Chriftians  
 are



“ are *licensed*, or rather *commanded* to baptize in that Case, but the *Necessity* of the  
“ *Office*? And that no Infant should go out of the World unbaptized? And this  
“ chokes all the Exception that is made from the Custom of giving Infants the *Eu-*  
“ *charist*, in the antient Church. For, as I have shewed before, that it was not held  
“ necessary to Salvation, as Baptism was; so here I must alledge, that it cannot be said,  
“ that the *Eucharist* was celebrated, and that all *Christians* might celebrate the *Eu-*  
“ *charist*, in this Case of Necessity, to the Intent that Infants might not go out of the  
“ World, either unbaptized, or without the *Eucharist*.”

Mr. Thorndike. *Just Weights and Measures*. 1662. p. 114.

“ As for the Sacrament of Baptism; that, as the Bishop only allows it, in any Case  
“ that may be questionable; so the *Ministring* of it may come to a *Deacon*, in the  
“ Priest's Absence, nay to a *Lay-Man*, rather than that any Child should dye un-  
“ baptized.”



*An Additional LETTER “ From Dr. John Cofin,  
 “ afterwards Bishop of Durham, to Mr. Cordel, who  
 “ scrupled to communicate with the French-Protestants,  
 “ upon some of the modern Pretences.”*

**D**R. Isaac Basire, Arch-Deacon of Northumberland, in his Account of Bishop Cofin, (annexed to his Funeral Sermon) in Page 58 hath these Words.

“ This Truth is confessed by somebody (otherwise, a good Man) who yet  
 “ seems no great Friend to our Bishop; but being convinced by the Reality  
 “ of these his Actions, especially abroad, hath these Words.—[*This must be reported*  
 “ *to the due Commendation of Dr. Cofin, that when he was in France, he neither joined*  
 “ *with the Church of French Protestants at Charenton, nigh Paris, [Dr. Basire here*  
 “ *inserts the Word false] nor kept any Communion with the Papists therein; but confined*  
 “ *himself to the Church of old English Protestants therein, where by his Pious living, and*  
 “ *constant Praying and Preaching, he reduced some Recusants to, and confirmed more*  
 “ *Doublers in the Protestant Religion. Many were his Encounters with Jesuits and*  
 “ *Priests, defeating the Suspensions of his Foes, and exceeding the Expectation of his*  
 “ *Friends, in the Success of such Disputes. Church-history, by Mr. Thomas Fuller,*  
 “ *Cent. XVII. Book XI. Sect. 38. p. 173.] His many Mistakes about Mr. Peter*  
 “ *Smart’s Prosecutions (or rather Persecutions) of our Bishop, are confuted by the Bi-*  
 “ *shop’s own express Letter, to Mr. Waring and Dr. Reeves; April 6. 1658. In*  
 “ *which Letter also our Bishop censures at large Mr. Fuller’s Calumny, wherein he*  
 “ *affirms that Dr. Cofin did not join with the French Protestants at Charenton; against*  
 “ *which Assertion the Doctor declares to all the World, that he never refused to join*  
 “ *with the Protestants there, or any where else, in all things wherein they joined with*  
 “ *the Church of England. And that our Doctor was constant in this his Judgment,*  
 “ *may further appear by a former full Letter of his from Paris, February 7. 1650.*  
 “ *written to one Mr. Cordel, then at Bloys, who seemed shy to communicate with the*  
 “ *Protestants there, upon this very Scruple of their inordinerly Ordination, &c. as Dr. Cofin*  
 “ *stiled it; who there and then determined the Question in the Affirmative, for our*  
 “ *Communion with them. Salvo semper Jure Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ.*”

I transcribe this whole Passage; as well to certify the Reader that such a Letter was written by Dr. Cofin, as to let him see the Occasion of it. The Letter follows.

“ To Mr. Cordel at Blois.

Paris, Feb. 7. 1650.

“ **I** Lyke your Moderation well, in giving so Fayre and Calm an Answer to *Monseur*  
 “ *Testard’s* Motion for Communicating in theyre Church; which truly (to speak  
 “ my Mind freely to you) I would not wish any of ours absolutely to refuse, or  
 “ determine to be unlawful, for fear of a greater Scandal that may thereupon arise, than  
 “ we can tell how to answer or excuse: Especially if any of us should renounce it,  
 “ upon these Two Grounds which you alledge for them; 1<sup>st</sup>, That they have no  
 “ Priests; 2<sup>dly</sup>, That they have no Consecration of the Elements.

“ I. For as to the first, though we may safely say, and maintaine it, that theyre  
 “ Ministers are not so dulye and rightly ordayned as they should be, by those Prelates  
 “ and Bishops of the Church, who, since the Apostles time, have only had the ordi-  
 “ nary Power and Authority to make and constitute a Priest; yet that, by reason of  
 “ this



“ this defect, there is a *Total Nullity* in theyre Ordination, or that they be therefore  
 “ no Priests or Ministers of the Church at all, because they are ordayned by those only  
 “ who are no more but Priests or Ministers among them; for my part I would be loath  
 “ to affirme and determine it against them. And these are my Reasons.  
 “ 1<sup>st</sup>, I conceive that the Power of Ordination was restreyned to Bishops, rather by  
 “ *Apostolical Practice*, and the perpetual Custome and Canons of the Church, than by  
 “ any *absolute Precept*, that either *Christ* or his Apostles gave about it. Nor can I yet  
 “ meet with any convincing Argument to set it upon a more high and divine Institu-  
 “ tion: From which Customs and Laws of the universal Church, (therein following  
 “ the Example of the Apostles) though I reckon it to be a great Presumption and Fault,  
 “ for any particular Church to recede, and may truly say that *fieri non oportuit*, (when  
 “ the College of meere Presbyters shall ordeyne and make a Priest,) yet I cannot so  
 “ peremptorily say that *factum non valet*, and pronounce the Ordination to be utterly  
 “ voyd. For, as in the *Case of Baptisme*, we take just Exceptions against a *Lay-man*,  
 “ or a *Woman*, that presumes to give it; and may as justly punish them by the Cen-  
 “ sures of the Church wherein they live, for taking upon them to do that Office, which  
 “ was never committed unto them; yet, if once they have done it, we make not  
 “ theyre Act and Administration of Baptisme voyd; nor presume we to *iterate* the Sa-  
 “ crament after them: So may it well be in the *Case of Ordination*. And the Mini-  
 “ sters of the reformed Congregations in *France*, who are lyable to give an Account,  
 “ both to God and his Church in general, for taking upon them to exercise that Power,  
 “ which by the perpetual Practice and Laws of his Church, they were never permitted  
 “ to Exercise, and may justly be faulted for it, both by the Verdict of all others who  
 “ are Members of the Catholique Church, (as we are, that adhere to the Laws of it  
 “ more strictly and peaceably then they do,) and by the Censures of a lawful Meeting,  
 “ or general Council in that Church, which at any time shall come to have Authority  
 “ over them. And yet all this while, the Act which they do, though it be *disorderly*  
 “ done, and the Ordinations which they make, though they make them *unlawfully*,  
 “ shall not be altogether *null* and *invalid*, no more than the Act of *Baptizing* before  
 “ mentioned, or the Act of *Consecrating* and Administring the *Eucharist* by a Priest  
 “ that is suspended, and restrayned from exercising his Power and Office in the Church.  
 “ Therefore if at any time a Minister so ordeyned in these *French Churches*, came to  
 “ incorporate himselfe in *ours*, and to receive a publique Charge, or Cure of Soules  
 “ among us, in the Church of *England*, (as I have known some of them to have so  
 “ done of late, and can instance in many other before my Time,) our Bishops did not  
 “ *reordeyne* him before they admitted him to his Charge; as they must have done, if  
 “ his former Ordination here in *France* had been voyd. Nor did our Lawes require  
 “ more of him, than to declare his publique Consent to the Religion received amongst  
 “ us; and to subscribe the Articles established. And I love not to be herein more wise,  
 “ or harder than our own Church is, which because it hath never publicquely condem-  
 “ ned, and pronounced the Ordinations of the other reformed Churches to be *voyd*, as  
 “ it doth not those of the unreformed Churches neither among the *Papists*, (though I  
 “ heare that the Ministers here in [See at the End A.] *France* and *Geneva* use so to do,  
 “ who will not admit a Papist Priest himselfe to exercise the Office of a Minister  
 “ among them, till they have re-ordained him;) for my part, as to that Particular, I  
 “ dare not take upon me to condemn, or determine a Nullity of their own Ordina-  
 “ tions against them; though in the interim I take it to be utterly a Fault among them,  
 “ and a great Presumption, deserving a great Censure to be inflicted on them, by such  
 “ a Power of the Church as may, by the Grace of God, be at any time duly gathered  
 “ together hereafter against them, as well for the Amendment of many other Disorders  
 “ and



“ and Defects in their Church, as for this particular *inorderly Ordination* and defect of  
 “ Episcopacy amongst them.

“ *2dly*, Besides that, this theyre Boldnes, Presumption and Novelty (in setting up  
 “ themselves, without any invincible Necessity that they had so to do, against the Apo-  
 “ stolical Practice, and perpetual Order of God's Church till their Dayes,) was alwayes  
 “ faulted, and reserved for farther Censure, in due time, which they have justly me-  
 “ rited. There have been both learned and eminent Men, (as well in former Ages as  
 “ in this; and even among the Roman Catholiques, as well as Protestants) who have  
 “ held and mainteynd it for good and passable Divinity, that Presbyters have the intrin-  
 “ sical Power of Ordination *in Actu primo*; though for the avoyding of Schisme, (as  
 “ St. *Hierom* speaks) and preserving Order and Discipline in the Church, they have been  
 “ restreyned ever since the first Times, and still are, (but where they take a Liberty to  
 “ themselves, that was never duely given them) from exercising their Power *in Actu*  
 “ *secundo*: And therefore, that however their Act of Ordayning of other Presbyters,  
 “ shall be voyd according to the Strictness of the Canon (in regard they were universally  
 “ prohibited from Executing that Act, and breaking the Order and Discipline of the  
 “ Church;) yet that the same Act shall not be simply voyd in the Nature of the thing,  
 “ in regard that the *intrinsical Power* remayned, when the *Exercise* of it was suspended,  
 “ and taken from them. Of this Opinion and Judgment in old Time, were St. *Hie-*  
 “ *rom* and his Followers, alleadged by *Gratian*, dist. 93. and of later Times:  
 “ *The Master of the Sentences*, Lib. IV. Dist. 24. *Bonavent.* ibid. 93. Art. 2. with other  
 “ Schoolmen, as *Aureol.* ibid. Art. 2. and *Anton. de Rosellis, de Poteft. Imper. & Papali*  
 “ Part IV. C. 18. and in this latter Age not only *Armachanus* in Sum. ad quaest. Art.  
 “ l. 11. c. 2. 3, &c. & c. 7. *Alphonf. a Castro* (verb. *Episcopus*) *Mich. Medina.* De Sacr.  
 “ hom. orig. Lib. I. c. 5. among the Roman Catholiques; but likewise *Cassander*, in  
 “ Consult. Art. 14. besydes *Melancthon*, *Clementias*, *Gerardus* and *Calixtus*, amongst  
 “ the Protestants; and Bishop *Jewel* (Def. 2. p. c. 3. d. 1. &c. 9. dis. 1.) Dr. *Field*,  
 “ of the Church, Lib. III. c. 39. *Hooker* Ecclef. Pol. Lib. III. §. 3. *ult.* and *Mason*  
 “ among the Divines of our own Church. All which Authors are of so great Credit  
 “ with you and me, that though we are not altogether of their Mind, yet we would  
 “ be loath to let the World see, that we contradict them all, and condemn their Judg-  
 “ ment openly; as needs we must, if we hold the contrary, and say, that the Mini-  
 “ sters of the reformed *French Churches*, for want of Episcopal Ordination, have *no*  
 “ Order at all.

“ *3dly*, If upon this ground we renounce the *French*, we must for the very same  
 “ Reason renounce all the Ministers of *Germany* besides, (for the *Superintendents*, that  
 “ make and ordeyne Ministers there, have no new Ordination, beyond their own Pres-  
 “ bytery, at all) and then what will become of the Protestant Party?

“ *4thly*, If the Church and Kingdom of *England* have acknowledged them (as they  
 “ did in admitting of them when they fled thither for Refuge; and placing them by  
 “ publique Authority in diverse of the most eminent *Cities* among us, without Prohi-  
 “ bition to any of our own People to goe and communicate with them) why should  
 “ we that are but private Persons, utterly disclayme their Communion in their own  
 “ Country?

“ *5thly*, S. *Cyprian's* Errour, in re-baptising Heretiques, was as scandalous to other  
 “ Churches abroad, as the *French* Errour is in their Ordayning of Ministers here; and  
 “ yet those other Churches abroad did not renounce Communion with him; but *Cor-*  
 “ *nelius* and his Clergy could well agree with him and his Followers, notwithstanding  
 “ the Difference between them in that particular; which is a fayre Pattern for our-  
 “ selves, though they in the mean while be in the wrong, as S. *Cyprian* then was, (and

“ so



“ so we may tell them, without disclayming their Communion) and we in the right,  
“ as *Cornelius* then was.

“ 6thly, Somewhat it is, that they do not absolutelye disclayme Episcopacy, nor  
“ ever did; but say and hold, That their Presbyters are Bishops, especially the chief  
“ Presbyters that presyde at their Ordinations and their Courts of Jurisdiction: So that  
“ the true Question between us and them, is not so much, whether there ought to be  
“ Bishops in the Church, or no; as whether theyre Presbyters be true Bishops; where-  
“ in I thinke they will have more to doe, to defend themselves for want of *Subordina-*  
“ *tion* then of *Ordination* it selfe. For where the Clergy are any great Multitude, Or-  
“ der doth necessarily require that they be distinguished by Degrees: and therefore as  
“ they have ever been, so we hold (and, as I believe, we hold most truly,) there ever  
“ ought to be at least two sorts of Ecclesiastical Persons, besydes *Deacons*, the one sub-  
“ ordinate to the other, as inferiour Ministers were to the Apostles at the beginning,  
“ and to the Bishops always since: Which we find plainly set forth in the Scripture,  
“ and in all Ecclesiastical Records that followed after. Thus by all that I have said in  
“ this first Point, you see my Mind; wherein I seek the Ways of Peace with others,  
“ without prejudice to the Truth and Right that we have among our selves. And there-  
“ fore under that *Protestation* (*See at the End B.*) which *Monsieur Testard* offers you a  
“ permission to make, and considering there is no Prohibition of our Church against it,  
“ (as there is against our communicating with the *Papists*, and that well grounded upon  
“ the Scripture and Will of God;) I doe not see but that both you, and others that are  
“ with you, may (eyther in Case of Necessity, when you cannot have the Sacra-  
“ ment among your selves; or in regard of declaring your Unitye in professing the *same*  
“ *Religion*, which you and they do) go other whiles to communicate reverentlye with  
“ them of the *French Church*. Only I could wish, that as you shall be admitted to  
“ your *Protestation*, before you do it; so you may be likewise admitted to receive that  
“ blessed Eucharist devoutly, upon your Knees, and have the Words pronounced to  
“ you, when they deliver it, which, even in *Scotland*, they omit not; and which in  
“ Effect the Ministers here in *France* say before, both in their Exhortation or Declara-  
“ tion to the People, and in their Prayers to God. [*Prenez, mangez les viandes Sa-*  
“ *crees de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ, qui nous veut vraiment faire participans de Son*  
“ *Corps & de Son Sang: le pain celeste pour vous repaistre & nourir a vie eternelle: la*  
“ *Communion de Jesus Christ nostre Seigneur livré pour nous a mort, & nous donne en*  
“ *viande & nourriture de vie eternelle; en certaine foy que nous jouissons de Son Corps et*  
“ *de Son Sang voire de Luy tout entierement. Jesus Christ estant vray Dieu & vray*  
“ *homme, est veritablement le Sainct pain celeste pour nous vivifier.*] Any of which Sen-  
“ tences (being their own already) if you could obteyne to be particularly sayd to you,  
“ when you receive the Sacrament in both Kinds, it would be more agreeable to the  
“ Institution and Nature of that holy Action and Service, and more efficacious to the  
“ elevating of your devout Souls at that instant Time, then barely to pass by, and have  
“ nothing sayd to you, but what was generally sayd before in the *Declaration* to all the  
“ People. Nor know I any Reason, why they may not as well satisfy your Desyres in  
“ these two Particulars, (without alleadging the Order of their Church against it) as  
“ suffer you to make your *Protestation*, which is no less against their Order, than the  
“ others are: Though we hold not eyther of them so material, as that without them  
“ there may be no Communion at all.

“ II. Now as to the second Point of Consecrating the Sacrament: I shall need to say  
“ no more, but that whether you take it after the way of the *Greeke Church*, by  
“ Prayers and Invocation; or after the way of the *Latine*, by Repeating the Words of  
“ our Saviour in the Institution of the Sacrament, it cannot be denyed, but that these  
“ *French Churches* have them both; as you may see in their publique Books appointed



“ for that purpose, though disposed after another Order than ours is. And if it be *Idem*,  
 “ though it be *Idem alio modo*, it alters not the Substance or Nature of the thing it selfe :  
 “ which is as much as at the present I can say to both your Demands : And which  
 “ you may communicate to whom you please, (to *Monsieur Testard* and all, if you will)  
 “ but specially to my noble Friend Sir *Ralph Verney*, whose Servant I am, as I am  
 “ lykewise truly yours.

J. C.

“ *Monsieur Testard* will do you and me a special Favour, and he will do some good  
 “ Service in it besydes to our King, to our Church, and to his own Partye, if at your  
 “ instant Request (which I pray make to him) he will be pleased (according to the  
 “ Protestation, which he will permit you to subscribe) to give his direct Answer to these  
 “ two Questions, which you may prepare ready for him in a fayre Paper written alone  
 “ by themselves, *viz.*

“ 1. Whether the *French Churches* here reformed, hold and urge such an absolutely  
 “ Necessity of Presbytery, as that all other Churches are bound to receive and establish  
 “ it among them ?

“ 2. Whether Episcopacy, or the Government of Churches by Bishops (especially being  
 “ assisted by Presbyters, as ours are by theyre Deans and Chapters) be not a lawful  
 “ Order and Government in God's Church.

“ Sure I am, that not only the Reformed Churches in *Germany*, both in their *Con-*  
 “ *fession of Auspurg*, in their Apologie for that Confession, *Cap. de Ordine Ecclesiastico*,  
 “ & *Cap. de Poteft. Ecclesiæ*, theyre other Colloquies at *Wormes* and *Ratispon*, and  
 “ in divers of theyre Bookes besydes, but lykewise Mr. *Calvin* (who subscribed to the  
 “ *Augustane Confession*) in his Booke *de Necessitate Reformandæ Ecclesiæ ad Sadoletum*  
 “ *Cardinalem*, his old Friend, and in his Epistles to Archbishop *Cranmer*, and Bishop  
 “ *Ridley*, and in his *Institutions*, Lib. IV. Cap. IV. §. 4, &c. and with him Mr. *Beza*  
 “ too, in his Booke, *de Diversis Grad. Ministerii*, Cap. XXI. §. 2. and Cap. XVIII.  
 “ §. Sure I am, (I say) that all these acknowledge Episcopacye and the Government  
 “ by Bishops to be lawful ; and therefore I doubt not, but *Monsieur Testard*, and as  
 “ many more Ministers of the *French Church* as be neere him, (but himselfe howso-  
 “ ever) may well subscribe his Hand and Seale to both the Questions propounded.

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A. “ *Monsieur Testard* can tell you, whether this be true, or no : And if it be true,  
 “ I know not how they will be able to justifie it.

B. “ Which was, not to recede in any wise, from the Doctrine and Discipline of  
 “ the Church of England ; nor thereby to approve this Discipline of the *French Churches*  
 “ for a Rule to others ; or to joyne with them that renounce Episcopacye, and Con-  
 “ demne the Proceedings of our owne Church, or the Lawes of our owne Kingdome.

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The SECOND PART  
Of the Judgment of the Church of *ENGLAND*  
in the Case of Lay-Baptism and Dissenters Baptism.

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The P R E F A C E.

**T**O put a Stop to the Practice of *Re-baptizing* such People as were in Communion with the *Church of England*, but made to doubt (by troublesome and over-busy Innovators) of the Validity of their former Baptism, because it had been conferred by *Dissenting Teachers* (who in all these Disputes are called *Laymen*) there was a little Book written to shew (and therefore called) *The Judgment of the Church of England, in the Case of Lay-Baptism and Dissenters Baptism*: Which Judgment was (as the Author believed,) that such Persons as had been before baptized *with Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* (although their Baptism were *irregular* for want of a proper Administrator) ought not to be baptized again.

This Book, in a little Time, received an *Answer* of some Length, by a Man who writes apace, and under the Prejudice (though he may think it none) of defending his own unusual Practice; having been (as it is said) re-baptized by an *irregular Curate*, who acquainted neither the Minister of the Parish nor the Bishop with the true State of the Case: And this I say to correct a Mistake in the former Book, wherein I had supposed the Bishop to be truly informed, that the adult Person had been before baptized by a *Dissenting Teacher*; whereas he had been only asked to permit an *adult Person* to be baptized, to which he easily gave Leave. I would not therefore have *this Example* shrowded under the Authority of that *excellent Prelate*, as though he had permitted the *Re-baptizing* a Man, who had been before baptized by a *Dissenting Teacher*, after he knew it was so.

I have carefully read this *Answer*, and do, in the following Papers, take Notice of some Particulars in it: But the following Papers are not intended for a *Reply* to that *Answer* (that may be done perhaps by some body else, if it be thought necessary) but for Confirmation, or a sort of Illustration, of the former Book; of which some Particulars are here explained, and set forth more at large, and others are added to them; and put into a Method, better fitted to the Apprehension of that sort of People that is likeliest to be disturbed by these New Teachers, whom I venture to call (for Brevity's Sake, and not in Obloquy) *Rebaptists*; and think my self justified by the 19<sup>th</sup> Canon *Concil. Nice.* which orders the *Paulianists* to be *re-baptized*, although it thought those Hereticks had never been baptized at all, because they were not baptized in the *Form* prescribed by *Christ*, i. e. *In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*.

I have called this Book *The Second Part of the Judgment of the Church of England*, not because it is altogether new, and different from the former, but because indeed I would not be at the Pains of modelling a-new the *first Part*, and working into it the Particulars that are here supplied. And I hope the Reader will not think his Patience hereby abused, or that he is put to an unnecessary Charge in purchasing this Part, if he has the former. He will rather give me leave to answer an Objection that may be made to *both these Books*, and that is, that the endeavouring to shew the Validity of Lay—and of Dissenters Baptism, will encourage the Dissenters to continue in their  
State



State of Separation from the Church of *England*, and tempt ill People to despise the Priestly Office, if those who are no Priests may be allowed to make Christians. To this I answer, *First*, That by endeavouring to shew what is the Judgment of the Church of *England* in these Cases, I do no farther encourage either of those Mischiefs, than I apprehend the Church of *England* encourages them, and so far I shall always go, without fear of going wrong. *Secondly*, If any of these Mischiefs should follow, to whom should they be imputed? To those who terrify the Minds of honest People, by filling them with Doubts and Scruples about the Validity of their Baptism? Or to those who tell them their Baptism is good and valid, according to the Judgment of the Church in whose Communion they live? Shall it be permitted to every audacious private Man, by Writing, Preaching, and Discourfing, to disturb the Peace of the Church, unsettle Peoples Minds, and cause them to doubt of their very Christianity, and not be lawful to let those People know how little Cause they have to be disturbed, unsettled, or to doubt of their Christianity, by shewing them, that the Church admits of, and accounts their Baptism to be good, although it were administered by People who were not *lawful Ministers* according to the Church of *England*? But, *thirdly*, I do not conceive what mischief such Books will do, with respect to the Dissenters, nor how they will receive any Encouragement to continue in their Separation, if even the Church should make an open Declaration, that the Baptisms which their Teachers confer (which we suppose to be Right in the *Matter* and *Form*) are such as ought not to be *reiterated*. What Use would the Dissenters make of such a Declaration? Why, they would know thereby that the Church of *England* accounts them to be *Christians*; a great Matter! But have they not always known this? Has the Church ever declared otherwise? Were they ever given to understand that the Church believed them to be no Christians? Has any Bishop, Priest, or Deacon of the Church of *England* told them, at any Time, either publicly or privately (till within these few Years past,) that they were not Christians? Have we not all along called them our *Christian Brethren*, and our *Dissenting Brethren*? Have we not constantly treated them as *Schismatics*? What Sense is there in that Word, unless they be *Christians*? Do we not daily reproach them with their needless Separation from the Church, and with the Mischiefs that follow thence? And could we do this reasonably, unless we supposed them to be Christians? So that whether we give them good or bad Words, whether we treat them as Friends or Enemies, we all along suppose them to be Christians. And would a Declaration then, that the Church allows not of *Re-baptizing* such as come over from the dissenting Congregations, to the Communion of the Church, would this (I ask) tell them what they did not know before? Or would it encourage them to continue where they are? Will they be readier to come over to the Church, when they are told they must be first *Re-baptized*? Will they the rather stand out, because the Church has made the way to their Return easier? What Temper are these People of, that fly still farther from you, the nearer you endeavour to approach them? Tell them they are as *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and they will listen, and draw near, and, with a little more ill Usage run into your Arms: But, own them to be *Christians*, tell them the Doors of our Church are always open to them, and that they only want to enter and communicate with us, in all the Ordinances of *our common Lord*, to make themselves and us the happiest People in the World, and away they run, it seems, like so many wounded Deer. I profess I can hardly treat this Matter seriously, since I can see so little Cause to apprehend any Inconveniencies from such a Declaration, or any Manner of Encouragement the Dissenters would receive from it. Their Baptisms it is said would thereby be *authorized*, and receive a Sort of Sanction which they now want. I grant, that as far as declaring against *re-baptizing* such People, is authorizing their Baptism, so far the Church would *authorize* their Baptism by such Declaration; but that is very little, if any Thing at all. As for the Party that baptizes



baptizes thus without Commission, and against all Rule and Order, and against Command of lawful Superiors, he is by such a Declaration left in the State he was, he is not hereby excused nor justified, nor is his Fault (whatever it be) in any Degree extenuated or lessened, he must answer it to God and to the Laws; let the Baptism be never so good, he is never the more innocent Man, nor less obnoxious. But for the Baptism it self, that is thus conferred upon an innocent and altogether unoffending Person, what is the Harm of so far Authorizing that, as to declare, that since it is done, it must not be *undone*? And when the Church will not admit such Persons to be *re-baptized*, does it not do the same Thing to all Intents and Purposes? The Father brings his Child to his Parish-Minister, and tells him he is twelve Years old, but he hears from some People, that the Child is not a Christian, because he was baptized by a *Dissenting Teacher*; but there he stands, and if he be not a Christian, he desires he may be made one. The Minister, as is his Duty, acquaints the Bishop with it, and humbly desires to know what must be done. The Bishop tells him, that the Church allows him not to *re-baptize* such Child. The Minister acquaints the Father with it, and so the Matter ends. Now I would fain know, if the Father can think any otherwise than that his Child was rightly (though not regularly) baptized, and that this refusing to *re-baptize* the Child, was as effectual a Declaration, that such Baptism ought not to be reiterated, as if it had been expressly declared in so many Words; such Declaration would have saved his Scruple and Inquiry, but such a Refusal tells him fully what the Church's Judgment is. And will not the Dissenting Teacher who baptized it, be of the same Opinion? I think therefore, that the Church's *Declaration*, in such a Case, would have no worse Effect upon the Dissenters, than the *Silence* of the Church hath, and will have, supposing it be known and taken for granted that the Church will not (as she never has done yet) allow her Ministers to *re-baptize*. But after all, the Persons that are likeliest to be *re-baptized*, are not Dissenters, but such as have left them, such as have forsaken them, and joined themselves in Communion with the Church: These are the People who are to be filled with Scruples, and brought to doubt of the Validity of their Baptism, and therefore all the Disturbance is among the *Church-Members*, and the Dissenters, I imagine, feel no Inconveniency by these new Doctrines, nor think themselves concerned with these Disputes, and will, we may be confident, be the more backward to consider such Things, when they foresee that if they should go over to the Church, they must be *re-baptized*. It is therefore much for the Sake of such as are converted to the Church, for the Quiet of their Minds and Settlement of their Conscience in their new Choice, that such a Declaration were to be desired; and I know not if a Tenderness for such as are of our Communion, ought not to out-weigh the Fears of such Inconveniencies as some may apprehend may arise from such a Declaration. Add to this, that such a Declaration against *re-baptizing*, seems to me the only Way now left, to repress the forwardness of such young Students, as not having sufficiently considered the Doctrine of the ancient Church, and that of their own, with the Principles they proceeded upon, are ready at all Adventures to maintain the necessity of *re-baptizing*, and which are indeed the true Occasion of all this Mischief and Disturbance in the Church. As to ill Peoples being tempted by such a Declaration to despise the Priestly-Office, if those who are not Priests can be allowed to make Christians, I do not foresee that any such Use can be made of it, when those ill People shall see such *uncommissioned* Hands under all the Prohibitions, Discouragements and Restraints, that the Laws either of Church or State can lay them. Ill People will always despise the Priestly-Office, and not the less, I doubt, for the Priest's *magnifying* it to any Excess. I am afraid to meddle with any such Arguments; and therefore to Objections of this Kind shall only say, that the *Papish Church* (however defective in *Evangelical*) has certainly as much of *worldly* Wisdom as a Church need to have, and certainly carries,



ries the Priestly Dignity as high as it can well be carried, and understands, claims and maintains the Privileges, Honours and Advantages of the *Sacerdotal Powers*, as well as any Man in *England* can; and yet is not afraid of declaring that Lay-Baptism conferred in the Manner she prescribes is good and valid, and ought not to be reiterated, nor yet afraid that the Priestly Power will be thereby despised, or any Ways debased by being communicated (in this particular Part of it) to others who are not Priests, upon such and such Occasions and Emergencies. I have no *Authority* of my Own to press the Reader with, but I have as good Intentions, and as much Sincerity as Archbishop *Whitgift* had, when he wrote against the *old Puritans* upon this very Subject, and therefore I will end this Preface with his Words. This and the other little Book I have written, *Not to bring Confusion into the Church (for let Men take heed that they usurp not an Office whereunto they be not called, for God will call them to an Account for so doing;) but to teach a Truth, to take a Yoke of Doubtfulness from Mens Consciences, and to resist an Error not much differing from Donatism and Anabaptism.*

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## The SECOND PART

### Of the Judgment of the Church of *ENGLAND* in the Case of Lay-Baptism and Dissenters Baptism.

**I**T will be for the Reader's Service, that I divide the whole Time that has passed from the *Reformation* to this present Year 1712, into three distinct Periods, each of them containing fifty Years. The first fifty will take in the Reigns of King *Edward VI.* and *Queen Elizabeth.* The second fifty will take in the Reigns of King *James I.* and King *Charles I.* and the Usurpations, till the *Restoration* of King *Charles II.* The third fifty will begin in 1660, and End in 1712. I say then,

I. The *Articles of Religion*, and the *Book of Common-Prayer* with its *Rubrics*, were made in 1552, and the same Persons were employed in making both.

II. The *Articles of Religion*, which were made in 1562, were reviewed, changed, and approved by the same Persons (though there were many more) who had reviewed, changed, and approved the *Book of Common-Prayer* that was set forth three Years before, viz. in 1559.

It is therefore very probable, that the *Rubrics* and the *Articles* (being made near the same Time, and by the same Persons,) do not contradict or overthrow each the other, but are consistent, and agree very well together. When therefore the *Rebaptists* cannot forbear owning and confessing, that by the *Rubric* of the *Office of private Baptism*, Lay-Baptism was allowed, and held to be valid, for the first fifty Years of the *Reformation*, and yet will not forbear alledging, that by the *Articles* Lay-Baptism is condemned and nulled, and declared void; What do they say, but that the *Rubric* and the *Articles* contradict and overthrow each the other? But let the Reader remember, that every one of the Men who made the *Rubrics*, and the *Articles*, believed Lay-baptism to be valid, and allowed it in Case of Necessity.

III. The Church of *England* was, for the first fifty Years, a truly reformed Apostolical Church; the *Rebaptists* will not, I think, deny it, and yet this Church allowed of Lay-Baptism all that while. It is not therefore inconsistent with a truly reformed Apostolical Church to allow of Lay-Baptism: Whatever the Consequences are, of allowing Lay-Baptism, they are all of them to be charged on the Church of *England*, which allowed it for fifty Years. Let therefore the *Rebaptists* spend as much Time and Pains as they please, in urging and exaggerating the Inconsistencies, the Inconveniencies, the Mischiefs, the Unlawfulness, and Sinfulness of Lay-Baptism, their Arrows will every one of them light upon the Church of *England*. That truly Apostolical Church did, for full fifty Years, allow of a Practice (and never thought of mending it,) which according to our modern *Innovators* was absolutely sinful, and against the Law of Christ.

IV. The Church of *England* did, (for fifty Years,) say of a Child, though baptized by a Lay-Hand, (if baptized with the *Matter* and *Form* prescribed by Christ,) these very remarkable Words in the *Rubric*—*And let them not doubt but that the Child so baptized, is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again.* The Church of *England* did therefore for fifty Years, think and affirm, that a Child might be lawfully and sufficiently baptized, although it were not baptized by a lawful Minister, but by a Lay-Hand. How could the Church allow her Minister to say these Words, even when he stood by the *Font*, and had the Child within his Reach, had she accounted Lay-Baptism to be invalid? Why should not the *Sponsors* then have said to him, as the *Eunuch* said to *Philip*, *Here is Water, what hinders the Child to be baptized,* if it had not been so before? See the *Rubric* of all the *Common-Prayer-Books* before 1603.

V. Again,



V. Again, The Church of England did, for fifty Years, say thus also in her *Rubric*—*And if the Minister shall prove by the Answers of such that brought the Child, (i. e. brought it to the Church, after it had been baptized by a Lay-Hand at Home,) that all Things were done as they ought, then shall not be Christen the Child again, but shall receive him as one of the Flock of the true Christian People, saying thus,——I certify you, that in this Case ye have done well, and according unto due Order, &c.* Now certainly, the Church of England could not think her Minister had proved that *all Things were done as they ought*, if she had reckoned Lay-Baptism to be invalid. Nor could she allow her Minister to say to the Parents, Friends, or Sponsors of the Child, who brought it to Church, *ye have done well, and according unto due Order*, if she had reckoned a commissioned Administrator as *essential* to valid Baptism, as *Water* and the *Form* prescribed by Christ. Why should not the Child be christened by the Minister in the Church, if it had not been christened by a private Lay-Hand at Home? Why should such a Child be received *as one of the Flock of true Christian People*, if it were not truly christened by that Lay-Hand? And why should that be said to be *done well*, which (according to the *Rebaptists* Opinion,) was not done at all? Now if the Church of England allows, and requires her Minister to say all these Things of a Child that was baptized in haste, and in Time of Necessity, by a *Lay-Hand*, as certainly as she allows them to be said of a Child that was baptized in haste, and in Time of Necessity, by a *Minister of Episcopal Ordination*, is it not plain that she accounts Lay-Baptism to be good and valid, and that she will not have Baptism *reiterated* upon such a Child? And therefore all the Objections that Men in their hasty Zeal and indiscreet Warmths make against the Practice of Lay-Baptism, as inconsistent with these *Rubrics*, as calling on the Ministers to certify *Untruths*, and the like, they all of them lie very strong against the Church of England, for the first fifty Years, for she did certainly, for all that Space of Time, allow of Lay-Baptism; and when Children so baptized were brought to Church to have that Office compleated over them, these *Rubrics* were then used, this *Certification* was then made by the Minister, and he declared that *in such Case, all had been well done, and according unto due Order*: i. e. in Case of Necessity, *all was well done*, if the Child had been baptized with *Water*, and *in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, and it ought not to be baptized again. These Things were not at that Time thought to be inconsistent with the *Articles*; but now each Puny Writer rises up with great Authority against that Church of England in King *Edward's* Days, and those of Queen *Elizabeth*, condemns its Judgment and its Practice, and needs will enter on the *Merits of the Cause*.

VI. The Church of England did, for fifty Years, say in the *last Rubric* of private Baptism;—*But if they which bring the Infant to the Church, make such uncertain Answers to the Priest's Questions, that it cannot appear that the Child was baptized with Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, (which are essential Parts of Baptism) then let the Priest baptize it, &c. saying, If thou art not already baptized, N. I baptize thee, &c.* which is a plain Proof that she accounted not the Administrator to be essential to Baptism; for this was the *Rubric*, when the Child had been baptized by a Lay-Hand, and this was the *Rubric* fifty Years before the Words *Lawful Minister* were inserted by King *James*; and therefore there is no telling us, that a lawful Minister had been provided for before. The *Rebaptists* mind not enough these Differences, but think the *Rubrics* were heretofore as they now stand, and make their Inferences accordingly. An Historical Account therefore of these Changes would help, I thought, to set them Right in some Particulars: And thus much may suffice for the first fifty Years, all which Time (there is no denying it,) Lay-Baptism was so allowed by the Church, as to be thought as valid (though not as Regular,) as the Baptism that had been administered by the Parish-Priest, and was no more to be *reiterated* than his.

This



This was the Opinion of all the Archbishops, Bishops, and Clergy of the Kingdom, during that space of Time; and it does not appear that any of them thought this Practice contrary to the *Articles, Rubrics, or Canons* then in being, but concordant with them all, and with the Practice of the Catholic Church of *Christ*, and accounted it no Piece of *Popery* that wanted Reformation; and therefore I cannot chuse but wonder to hear the modern Innovators throw out (with equal Insolence and Ignorance) all the hard Words they can invent against this Practice, without remembering that it was allowed by the *Church of England*, for fifty Years together, and condemned by none but the *Puritans*. The Force of this Authority hath appeared so great, that some of the *Rebaptists* have thought fit to tell us, that the Lay-Baptisms, during these first fifty Years of the Reformation, were not the Baptisms now condemned, and contended against, as having been authorized by the Church; nay, even *commanded* by the *Rubric*, which says—*Then one of them SHALL Name the Child, &c.* so that these Lay-Baptizers seem to be thereby *impowered* to officiate for that Time and Circumstance. I did not really think this would have been said, but every Thing is welcome to me that justifies the Church of *England*. But then I hope that the Men who can say and come into this, will also yield that it is in the Power of the Church to *authorize* Lay-Baptism, in such Cases as it sees convenient, and that such Lay-Baptism is as valid and good as if the Parish-Priest had administered it, and that such Baptism must never be *reiterated*. I hope they will also yield, that a Lay-Baptizer, so authorized, for that Time and Circumstance, is also a *rightly commissioned* Administrator of that Sacrament: And also that such an *Authorizing* of a Lay-man is not inconsistent with, contradictory to, nor destructive of the 23<sup>d</sup> Article; no, nor of the *Commission* that our blessed Lord gave to his Apostles, *Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* These Things, I hope, will be allowed, because I think they naturally follow, from allowing the Lay-Baptisms in the first fifty Years to be valid, because they were *authorized*. But now, it seems, the Case is altogether altered, the *Lay-men* and *Dissenters* are utterly destitute of this Plea; there is no such Thing as *authorizing* Lay-Baptism now-a-days; the Alteration of the *Office of private Baptism* has taken away this Power from all but *lawful Ministers*, and the Dissenters who baptize *without*, and *in Opposition to* the Episcopal Authority, do Nothing now (they will tell you,) but *wash* or *sprinkle*. Their Baptism is no Baptism, it is to all Intents and Purposes null, invalid, and of no Effect; and all such as have been Baptized by *unepiscopal* Hands are *no Christians*, but whenever they have a Mind to become so, they must be re-baptized by a *lawful Minister*. All these marvellous Things were effected, by blotting out a few Words, and putting in some others, of which I am now going to give you some Account.

I. In the second fifty Years, at the beginning of them, in 1603, King *James I.* by his own Authority (but not without advising with some of the Bishops and other learned Men,) changed the *Rubric of Private Baptism*; and thinking the former one did allow, permit, and countenance Lay-Baptism (of which he declared his utter dislike) he commanded the Words, *then one of them shall, &c.* to be altered for these, *the Lawful Minister shall, &c.* so that, after this Year 1603, the *Lawful Minister* was the only Administrator of Baptism, that was *named* in that Office. And so the Change continued till the Year 1661, upon no other Authority, than what the *Kings of England* have in such Cases. This Remark was made in *the Judgment of the Church of England*, p. 524. and would not have been repeated here, had it not been said, by *R. L.* in his *Answer* to that Book, p. 30. *The Opinions delivered there, (i. e. at the Conference held at Hampton-Court) do not amount to any publick Act of the Church of England;* and p. 33. *what can any one learn from all this, (the same Conference) concerning the Judgment of the Church of England?* and p. 50. *I know of no other Voice of the Church of England, but that in Convocation,* and p. 66. *The Church's publick Acts can only be found in her Determinations, agreed on by a Lawful Convocation.* Now if this be so,



and that *R. L.* and his Followers will abide by this Declaration, that the *Church of England* speaks only by *Convocation*, then I must tell them, that neither the Office of *Publick*, nor of *Private Baptism*, were ever (that we know of) in, or before, any *Convocation*, till 1661, *The Communion Office* and *the Forms of Ordination* were made in a *Convocation*, but no other Parts of the *Common-Prayer*. And thereupon I say

II. If the Voice of the Church of *England* be only to be heard in *Convocations*, then the *Rubric of Private Baptism* from 1603 to 1661, (which appoints a *Lawful Minister*) was not the *Rubric of the Church of England*, but the *Rubric of King James* only, and a few private Bishops. The Church of *England* then must be considered as speaking only by *Act of Parliament* for the first fifty Years, without a *Convocation*, (except as before excepted) and for the next fifty Years, as speaking neither by *Act of Parliament*, nor by any *Convocation*; and that looks like speaking with no Authority at all. It had therefore been but fair dealing for *R. L.* and his Followers, to have said plainly that a *Lawful Minister* was only required *Authoritatively* by the *Rubric*, since 1661.

III. But because, it may be, others will not say, that the Church of *England* is only to be heard and hearkned to, when she speaks in *Convocation*; I will, in this dispute, take it for granted, that the Church of *England*, by order of King *James I.* made the *Rubric of Private Baptism*, as it stood from 1603 to 1661, and then say, in *January* 1603 the *Conference* was held at *Hampton-Court*, and the Words *Lawful Minister* were inserted into the *Rubric of Private Baptism*; and upon the Fifth of *March* following the King put out a *Proclamation*, in which were these Words—

“ But we cannot conceal that the Success of that *Conference* was such, as happeneth  
“ to many other things, which moving great Expectation before they be entred into,  
“ in their Issue produce small Effects; for we found mighty and vehement Informa-  
“ tions, supported with so weak and slender Proofs, as it appeareth to us and our Coun-  
“ cil, that there was no Cause, why any Change should have been at all, in that which  
“ was most impugned,—the *Book of Common-Prayer*,—containing the Form of  
“ the Publick Service of God here established, neither in the *Doctrine*, which appeared  
“ to be Sincere, nor in the *Forms and Rites*, which were justified out of the Practice  
“ of the Primitive Church. Notwithstanding, we thought meet, with the Consent  
“ of the Bishops, and other learned Men there present, that some *small things* might  
“ rather be explained than changed. Not that the same might not very well have been  
“ born with, by Men who would have made a reasonable Construction of them, &c.”

Now how could King *James* call this a *small thing*, and rather an Explanation than a Change, if he had built so much upon the Words *Lawful Minister*, as the Modern *Rebaptists* do? Did he account it a *small thing* whether a Man were a Christian or no? For according to these New Teachers, no one can possibly be a Christian, who is not baptized by a *Lawful Minister*, Episcopally Ordained. I do therefore bring these Words of the *Proclamation*, in Proof that King *James* did not think he had done such a wonderful Matter, nor made a Change of such Importance, by inserting the Words *Lawful Minister* into this *Rubric*, as these People fancy: And Dr. *Barlow*, who put out the *Conference* in 1604, by Command of Archbishop *Whitgift*, and who bore a part in it himself, says, that this Change was not much stuck at by the Bishops, so that neither King nor Bishops (for any thing I can see) did ever imagine so much Weight would be laid upon this Alteration, or that it would, more than an hundred Years after, be brought to Unchristen the whole *Protestant* World abroad, and the Twentieth Part (I doubt) of the Subjects of *England*, under the Reign of his Glorious *Great-grand-daughter*.

IV. But I say farther. If the Church of *England*, from 1603 to 1661, by adding the Words *Lawful Minister*, did declare Lay-Baptism to be invalid, null, and of no effect, then the Church of *England* in the second fifty Years, condemned the Church  
of



of *England* for the first Fifty, and in effect declared it not to be a truly Reformed Apostolick Church, during King *Edward's* and Queen *Elizabeth's* Days. Let this be honestly and plainly said, and we shall know where abouts we are.

V. Again. If the Church of *England*, by requiring a *Lawful Minister* to confer Baptism, intended only a Minister *Episcopally Ordained*, and did thereby condemn all other Baptism, as invalid, null, and of no effect, then did the Church of *England* condemn the Baptism of the Church of *Scotland*, as invalid, null, and of no effect; and consequently condemned the Baptism of Prince *Henry*, Prince *Charles* (afterwards King and Martyr) of Princess *Elizabeth* (the Mother of the Princess *Sophia*,) who together with her Son the *Electors of Hanover*, and his Son also the *Electoral Prince*, and all the Branches of that Royal Family, are all in the same sad Condition, for want of *Episcopal Baptism*) and of all King *James's* Children, who were, every one of them, Baptized by Presbyterian Hands, who had only Presbyterian Ordination. I do not make this Consequence, to create any ill Will to these Teachers of new Doctrines, but to shew them, how unlikely a thing it is, that King *James* (who was the Man that added the Words *Lawful Minister*) should intend thereby, *only* a Man *Episcopally Ordained*, when he knew, by a near and unavoidable Consequence, that, if that Doctrine were true, none of his own Children were, or could be Christians, unless they were *Re-baptized*, which he did not allow of, even when *Women* had baptized Children. And who can think the *Bishops*, (the Bishops who, I assure the Reader, at that Time, did not want the strongest Inclinations Men could have, to court the good Opinion of their new King, and bind him to the Church) who, I say, can think the Bishops would not have told the King the Consequence of such a Change, had they believed those Words (a *Lawful Minister*) imported such a Change, as the *Rebaptists* now think they do? I believe it would not have mis-become any one of those Bishops to have said;—

“ Sir, if your Majesty will have us insert into this Rubric, the Words *Lawful Minister*, and intend thereby such only as are *Episcopally Ordained*, and mean to say that none but such can Administer *Valid Baptism*, consider, we intreat you, what will be the Consequence? Whether you have a Child now in the World, that is validly Baptized? Those who Baptized your Children were themselves both Baptized and Ordained by mere *Presbyters*, and therefore were not *Lawful Ministers*, and if none but *Lawful Ministers* can confer *Valid Baptism*, none of the *Royal Infants* have that *Valid Baptism*.”

I do not know why any one of them ought not, in Honesty and good Conscience, to have said these things, but that not any one of them (it is probable) believed them to be true. Not one of them could think a *Lawful Minister* was intended to exclude all others from being *Lawful Ministers*, but such as were *Episcopally Ordained*, (that was not the Doctrine of those Days) nor did one of them believe that Baptism conferred by an *Unepiscopal Hand* was null, invalid, and of no effect. These Doctrines were reserved for the Days we live in, when the *Divine Right of Episcopacy* is carried to the highest Pitch that Words can raise it, but the *Bishops* themselves so used as never Bishops were, since the Days of the Apostles; in this, indeed, they fare alike with those great Saints, that they are *despised, reviled, defamed, made as the filth of the World, and the Offscouring of all things*. God forgive those Men who set this bad Example first, and those who have thought fit to follow it! The thing I would leave upon the Reader's Mind here, is, that it is not at all likely, that either King *James*, or the *Bishops*, intended by inserting the Words *Lawful Minister*, in this Rubric, to say that they meant thereby a Minister *Episcopally ordained* only, exclusive of all others not so ordained; or to say that Baptism administered by one that is not a *lawful Minister*, was null, invalid, and of no Effect, provided it were *seriously* administered by one that used the *Matter* and the *Form* prescribed by *Christ*. For this I also offer the following Article to be considered.

VI. If



VI. If the Church of *England*, by inserting the Words *lawful Minister*, meant thereby only one Episcopally ordained, then she must contradict her own Orders, and overthrow her own Doctrine and Design, by *admitting* and *instituting*, and *inducting* into Parishes such Persons as had not been Episcopally Ordained. But this was certainly her Practice, during the Reigns of King *James* and King *Charles I.* and to the Year 1661. We had many Ministers from *Scotland*, from *France*, and the *Low-Countries*, who were Ordained by *Presbyters only*, and not Bishops, and they were *instituted* into *Benefices with Cure*, and accordingly Baptized the Children of their several Parishes, and did all other Offices of the Ministry, and yet were never *Re-ordained*, but only subscribed the *Articles*; and both those Kings (who well understood our Church) allowed this, and the Bishops instituted them into these Livings, notwithstanding the *Thirty-nine Articles*, notwithstanding the *Rubrics*, and notwithstanding the *Canons*. How will the Church of *England* answer this? I know not how she will answer this, to these *new Guides*, and those who blindly follow them, but I believe all serious thinking People, will imagine that the Church of *England*, did not by *Lawful Ministers* intend *only* such as were Episcopally Ordained, though principally such, no doubt of it. She knew, and acknowledged such as were Episcopally Ordained, to be *Lawful Ministers*, in the best Sense, and in all the Senses those Words can bear, and would most heartily rejoice, and give God Thanks, that there were no other; and would do every thing fit and proper for her to do, to bring that blessed Work to pass. But, by her *Practice*, by her *Allowance*, and by her *Institutions* to Parish Cures, of such as had not been Episcopally Ordained, it appears that she did not exclude them from being *Lawful Ministers*, nor consequently disannul, and make void the Baptisms they had conferred; which is the thing I am contending for. And I desire those warm Gentlemen who are for Unchristening all People who have not been Baptized by Episcopal Hands, to fancy they had lived in any Year betwixt 1603 and 1648, and known that King *Charles I.* was baptized by no Episcopal Hand; and seen the Bishops instituting into Parish-Cures, such as had been ordained and baptized by mere Presbyters, and thereby putting them into a Necessity of baptizing Multitudes of Children; and then think, whether they should have judged King *Charles* to be no Christian, and the Bishops to have acted contrary to the *Articles*, *Rubrics*, and *Canons*; which is now the Charge upon all that will not *Re-baptize*.

I. In 1661, which begins the last Period of fifty Years, there was no material Change made in the *Office*, or the *Rubrics* of *Private Baptism*, but they continued near the same with what they had been from 1603, only now they were authorized, and received a new Sanction both from the *Parliament* and *Convocation*. So that now the Church of *England* speaks very loudly and plainly by them.

II. As for the *Office of Baptizing those of riper Years*, the Church made it entirely New in 1661, and the *Preface* to the *Common Prayer* gives this following Account of it.

“ Which (Office) though not so necessary, when the former Book was compiled, yet “ by the growth of *Anabaptism*, through the Licentiousness of the late Times crept in “ amongst us, is now become necessary; and may be always useful for the baptizing “ of Natives, in our *Plantations*, and others converted to the Faith.”

This plainly shews that the Church of *England* had no Thoughts of Re-baptizing the *Dissenters*, when it composed this Office; but of baptizing such as had never been baptized, at home, and such as were to be converted to Christianity, in our *Plantations* abroad: These were the People she employed her Care and Compassion on; but for the *Dissenters*, she never thought in the least of making them *Christians*, but of inviting them into *Union* and *Communion* with the Church. She exhorted and intreated them to leave *the Separation*; and such as did so she received into her Arms with gentleness and love; she received them without any Renuntiation of their Schism, or formal detestation



detestation of their Error or Offence in leaving her; she trusted their Sincerity of Heart, and put them to no confusion of Face: She received their Children to *Confirmation* without exception or distinction, just as she did the Children of such as had been baptized in her Bosom, and had never strayed from it. This was the Temper of the Bishops then, and then, if ever, was the Time the Bishops should have spoken out, and should have told the Dissenters, and should have ordered their Clergy to have told the Dissenters, both from the *Pulpit* and the *Press*, both at *Church* and at *Home*, that they wanted the very *Foundation* of Christianity, both they and their Children, namely *Baptism*: They might indeed have been *washed* or *sprinkled*, but they had never been *baptized*. They who pretended to Baptize, were no *Lawful Ministers*, they had not been *Episcopally Ordained*, they were as errant *Laicks*, as the Shopkeepers; nor were their Baptisms *authorized*, as having been conferred not only *without*, but *in Opposition* to the Church, and in a State of an unwarrantable *Exclusion* of the Sacred Order of Bishops; therefore their Baptism was not valid; therefore they must begin their Race of Christianity again, and set out at the proper Place, namely at Baptism. Will any Man in the Kingdom say, that the Baptisms conferred by dissenting Teachers, (Ordained by Presbyters alone) from 1650, to 1660, were not as *unauthorized*, and as *Antiepiscopal* Baptisms, as any now-a-days can be? And yet the College of Bishops should not say a Word to the Matter; not one of that venerable Body open his Mouth against them, nor order any of the Lower Clergy to convince the Dissenters, that for want of valid Baptism, they were in a State of *uncovenanted Mercy*! I for my own part, have so good an Opinion of the Learning, Virtue, and Religion, of that Sett of Bishops, that I think they must and would have declared against the Validity of those *Antiepiscopal, unauthorized* Baptisms, had they believed them to be indeed null and invalid; and it must needs be one of the hardest and most unkind Reflections on their Memory, to say they were afraid of stirring up bad humours again, and had \* the Fate of Archbishop *Laud* before their Eyes, and dreaded the Fanatic Rage, that made such Work before on lesser Occasions than this; that they might be intimidated, as *St. Peter*, and carried away like *Barnabas*, with the like Excuses. This is a very bad Account of the Behaviour of the Bishops, after the *Restoration*, and makes not at all for their Honour. Whether a Man, living in the midst of a Christian Kingdom, be a Christian or no, is not a light Matter, but of the greatest Moment in the World, his everlasting safety depends upon it, and the Minister to whose charge he properly belongs, is certainly obliged to acquaint him with his danger, in case he know it not; and could you say a worse thing of this Minister, than that he knowingly suffered a Man to live and dye unbaptized, without so much as warning him of his Danger? The *Dissenters* believed their Children (who had been baptized between 1650, and 1660) to be indeed *Christians*; and when, at the *Restoration*, the Bishops were also restored to their Sees, and the *Episcopal Clergy* filled all the Parish-Churches in *England*, was it not then the Time to have expected to hear from one, or the other, or both, that their Children were *not* Christians, and must be made so by *lawful Ministers* of Episcopal Ordination? And hearing nothing on this Head, and seeing those Children admitted to *Confirmations* by the Bishops, how could they help concluding their Children had been rightly baptized? If this general Silence of the Church, this Acquiescence of the Clergy, and this subsequent Practice of the Bishops, in *confirming* the Children indistinctly, be not a good proof of the Church's believing such *unauthorized* Baptisms to be *valid*, it will be hard to find out what can be a Proof. This Defence I could not refuse to the Memory of those Bishops, but the Point I aimed at, was to shew that the *New Form* of Baptism for *grown-up Persons*, was designed for such as never pretended to have been baptized, and not for the *Dissenters*. Nor is it for the Dissenters sake, that I take these pains; (for they neither care for, nor

\* Dissenters Baptism null and void, p. 52.



make use of this Defence, but account their Ordinations and their Baptisms equally good with those of Bishops;) but it is for the Church of *England's* sake that I now Write, that never did, nor would admit, much less injoin, her Clergy to *Re-baptize* such as had been before baptized with the *Matter* and *Form* prescribed by Christ, upon pretence that Baptism had not been conferred by a *Lawful Minister*.

III. In 1661, a great Change indeed was made in the *Preface* to the Forms of Ordination, of which these Innovators have made much use in their Disputes about Lay-baptism. The Reader must first see how the *Preface* stood from 1559, to 1661, and then how it was changed, and what was added in 1661.

Thus then it stood for one hundred and two Years.

“ It is evident unto all Men diligently reading holy Scriptures, and Antient Authors,  
 “ that from the Apostles Time, there hath been these Orders of Ministers in Christ’s  
 “ Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, which Offices were evermore had in such  
 “ reverent Estimation, that no Man [by his own private Authority] might presume to  
 “ execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to  
 “ have such Qualities, as were requisite for the same, and also by publick Prayer,  
 “ with Imposition of Hands, approved and admitted thereunto by *Lawful Authority*.  
 “ And therefore to the intent these Orders  
 “ should be continued, and reverently used  
 “ and esteemed in this Church of *England*,  
 “ it is requisite that no Man (not being at  
 “ this present, Bishop, Priest, or Deacon)  
 “ shall execute any of them, except he be  
 “ called, tried, examined, and admitted,  
 “ according to the Form hereafter fol-  
 “ lowing.

*And therefore to the intent that these Orders  
 may be continued and reverently used, and  
 esteemed in the Church of England, no Man  
 shall be accounted, or taken, to be a lawful  
 Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, in the Church  
 of England, or suffered to execute any of the  
 said Functions, except he be called, tried, exa-  
 mined, and admitted thereunto according to  
 the Form hereafter following, or hath had for-  
 merly, Episcopal Consecration or Ordination.*

Note, the Words within the Crotchets [ ]  
 were left out in 1661.

All that is Printed in *Italick*, was the  
 Change made in 1661.

The Use which the *Rebaptists* make of this *Preface*, thus altered, is this—The Church of *England* requires a *lawful Minister* to be the Administrator of Baptism: The Church of *England* calls no one a *lawful Minister*, but him who is *Episcopally ordained*: Therefore the Church of *England* declares the Baptism of all Persons not administered by Episcopal Hands, to be *invalid*, null, and of no Effect.

IV. To this Argument, I think, the following Answer may be made out of what has been before said. 1. The Church of *England* did, for her first fifty Years, allow of Baptism, administered by neither Bishop, Priest, nor Deacon: And said a Child so baptized, was *lawfully and sufficiently baptized*, and ought not to be baptized again. 2. The Church of *England* did, in her next fifty Years, call for a *lawful Minister* to baptize Children; but she did not say, all that while, that they who were not *Episcopally ordained* were not *lawful Ministers*: For she admitted, and instituted into *Parish-Cures*, such as had not been *Episcopally ordained*, and consequently admitted their Baptisms to be good and valid; or else she was very unfaithful to her Lord, and cruel to her Children. But (3.) It is not a due, nor just, much less a necessary Consequence, that because the Church of *England* calls for a *lawful Minister* to baptize, and calls none in the Church of *England* a *lawful Minister* but him who is *Episcopally ordained*, she should therefore account no Baptism *valid* but such as is administered by an Episcopal Hand. It will indeed follow, that she would fain have no other Baptism but that: She asks, she wishes, for no other but that: She calls no other *lawful* but that, because the

Laws



Laws of the Church and of the State have appointed and commanded that, and none but that; and that is most agreeable to the Rules and Practice of the antient Church from the Time of the Apostles. But she does not therefore account all other Baptism to be invalid, null, and of no Effect: She takes what Care she can of her own Children, and would by all Means keep them in the Ways of Regularity and Order; but she does not thereby condemn all others that walk not by her Rules. She will have no Man accounted a *Priest* or *Deacon*, but who is or has been ordained by *Bishops*, but this is *in the Church of England*: They shall not exercise the Functions of either Priest or Deacon, but this is *in the Church of England*. This excludes the *Presbyters* of *France, Germany, Scotland, Holland*, and of all other Protestant Countries, from holding any *Benefices, Dignities, or Promotions*, and from exercising the Functions of Presbyters, *in the Church of England*, unless they be, or have been ordained by Bishops of the *Latin, or Greek, or of our own Church*. She would heretofore, *in voto*, in Desire, have had no other Pastors and Curates, but such as were *Episcopally ordained*; she was in the Right of it; that was according to the antient Rule and Practice; but she did not condemn all others not so ordained, nor exclude them from exercising the Functions of Presbyters, even in the Church of *England*. The Case is now somewhat altered; she now excludes them all, but she does not thereby condemn them. She will have none of them baptize in *England*, but does she thereby disannul (in her Judgment and Opinion I mean) the Baptisms of all those Countries that are administered by Presbyters? Was it ever understood, that if a *French, Helvetic, German, Scottish, or Dutch* Presbyter should desire to communicate with the Church of *England*, he was to be first baptized? If he desire to be a *Clergyman*, and hold a *Benefice*, or obtain a *Dignity* in the Church of *England*, he must indeed be ordained, according to the *English Form*, or by some Episcopal Hand elsewhere, for that has been the Law ever since 1661; and no one since that Time can be accounted a *lawful Minister*, but such a one. But does it follow from hence, that all the Children they had formerly baptized, were not Christians? This is a Consequence indeed made by these *Rebaptists*, but this Consequence is not made by the Church of *England*: She may make what Laws and Rules she thinks fit for those of her own Communion, and may appropriate her *Revenues*, and all her *secular Advantages* to whom she pleases, and upon what Terms and Conditions she will; but she cannot pretend to invalidate the Orders and the Ministrations of other People, with whom she has nothing to do: Nor did she ever pretend to null any of their Baptisms, which is the thing I am solely concerned about. Has not my Lord Bishop of *London*, have not several other Bishops, both heretofore and lately, ordained several *Protestants* from abroad, and several of our own *Dissenting Ministers* at home; have they not, I say, ordained these People, without baptizing them a-new? They would not admit them to be *Ministers* in the Church of *England*, without ordaining them by the *English Form*, (because the Laws both of Church and State have forbid it, ever since 1661,) but they took them to be Christians (though baptized by Presbyterian Hands) or else they would not, I presume, have ordained them; for when was it heard, either of old or late, that a Man could be ordained a Priest, who had not been Baptized? Orders suppose a Man to be a Christian already, but they do not make him one; for if they did, a Man might be a Christian without being baptized with Water, and without being baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and (which it seems is full as bad) without having the *Matter and Form* applied by an *Episcopal Hand*, i. e. without any one of the three Essentials of Baptism (according to the new Scheme) a Man might be a good Christian. I have heard of People's being baptized in their Blood, i. e. made, or rather accounted, Christians, by suffering *Martyrdom* for Christ: but I have never heard that the *Rites of Ordination* did ever confer the *Sacrament of Baptism*. That remains for our *Rebaptists* to urge in Favour of such Clergymen,



men, (either old or new Profelytes) as were so unhappy as to be baptized by Dissenters, but put into Holy Orders by the Bishops, without baptizing them a-new. But though there be no End of extravagant Absurdities, which will multiply every Hour, upon these new Teachers, and that it would puzzle the wisest Head in the Kingdom to tell us how far these Ecclesiastical Projectors will carry us, and where they will stop; yet since they have not as yet asserted openly *that* Episcopal Ordination will supply the Defect of valid Baptism, since, I say, they have not yet proceeded thus far, I desire them to call upon these worthy Bishops, who have at any Time ordained dissenting Teachers, or any People else who were baptized by Dissenters, and humbly ask their Reasons why they did not first baptize them, and make *them* Christians before they ordained them, and invested them with the Power to baptize and make *others* Christians, and all this in Contradiction and Defiance of the *Articles*, the *Rubrics* and the *Canons*, which are, it seems, so plain in Favour of *Re-baptizing* all such as were not baptized by Episcopal Hands? When the Bishops have given their Reasons for this Practice of theirs, we shall be able to judge whether the *Bishops* or the *Rebaptists* are in the Right, and govern our selves accordingly. But till I see their Lordships change their Practice in this Particular, and refuse to *ordain* either *Foreigners* from abroad, or *Dissenters* at home, without baptizing them a-new; till I hear they refuse to *confirm* the Children of Dissenters, who were baptized by Dissenters; till I hear they order their Clergy, both by Preaching, Writing, and Discouraging, to tell their Congregations, that unless they have been baptized by Episcopal Hands, *they are not Christians*, they must not come to the blessed *Sacrament*, they ought not to be *married* by the appointed Form, which supposes both Parties to be Christians, nor can they, or ought they, to have *Christian Burial*, the Rubric (confirmed by Parliament and Convocation) expressly excluding *unbaptized* Persons; till I hear they order their *Chancellors*, *Officials*, *Surrogates*, and all that belong to the *Court-Christian*, to leave off excommunicating Dissenters that never were baptized, *i. e.* to leave off a Practice ridiculous, scandalous, and almost blasphemous, namely, the solemnly cutting off from *the Body* of Christ, such as they say were never *Members* of it; the excommunicating People who never could have been in their Communion, for want of that which is to initiate all Men into Christ's Church, *i. e.* *Baptism*; till I hear the Gentlemen of *Doctors Commons* have Orders to excommunicate *Jews*, *Turks* and *Infidels*, (which they may do as well as *Dissenters*, if they are not really baptized :) In a Word, till I hear the Bishops say and do in these Cases, what certainly becomes Church-Governours of Learning, Virtue, Conscience, and Religion, to say and do, were they indeed persuaded that the Dissenters were not Christians for want of Episcopal Baptism: Till I can hear and see this, I will still believe that *it is the Judgment of the Church of England, that Lay-Baptism seriously conferred in Matter and Form prescribed by Christ, is not to be reiterated, although it was irregular for want of a proper Administrator.* And when I see it is well proved, that the Church of *England* is of another Judgment, it will be Time enough to enter into *the Merits of the Cause*. At present I am humble enough to depend upon the Church's Judgment, collected from her constant Practice in some Cases, and from her as constant Silence in others; and do believe in my Heart that both of them are concordant with the Judgment and the Practice of the Catholic Church of Christ, and very consistent with her own *Articles*, *Rubrics*, and *Canons*.



Four SERMONS: I. On the Death of Queen MARY, 1694. II. On the Death of the Duke of GLOUCESTER, 1700. III. On the Death of King WILLIAM, 1701. IV. On the QUEEN'S Accession to the Throne, in 1703.

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## P R E F A C E.

**T**H E publishing a few Sermons, whilst I live, the latest of which was preached above eight Years since, and the first above Seventeen, will make it very natural for People to inquire into the Occasion of doing so: And to such I do very willingly assign these following Reasons.

*First*, From the Observations I have been able to make, for these many Years last past, upon our publick Affairs; and from the natural Tendency of several Principles and Practices, that have, of late, been studiously revived, and from what has followed thereupon, I could not help both fearing and presaging, that these Nations would, some Time or other, if ever we should have an enterprizing Prince upon the Throne, of more Ambition than Virtue, Justice, and true Honour, fall into the Way of all other Nations, and lose their *Liberty*.

Nor could I help foreseeing to whose Charge a great deal of this dreadful Mischief, whenever it should happen, would be laid, whether justly or unjustly was not my Business to determine; but I resolved, for my own particular Part, to deliver my self, as well as I could, from the Reproaches and the Curses of Posterity, by publicly declaring to all the World, that although in the constant Course of my Ministry, I have never failed, on proper Occasions, to recommend, urge, and insist upon, the loving, honouring, and the reverencing the Prince's Person, and holding it according to the Laws, inviolable and sacred, and paying all Obedience and Submission to the Laws, though never so hard and inconvenient to private People: Yet did I never think my self at Liberty, or authorized, to tell the People, that either *Christ*, *St. Peter*, or *St. Paul*, or any other holy Writer, had, by any Doctrine delivered by them, subverted the *Laws* and *Constitutions* of the Country, in which they lived; or put them in a worse Condition, with respect to their civil Liberties, than they would have been, had they not been Christians. I ever thought it a most impious Blasphemy against that Holy Religion, to father any thing upon it, that might encourage Tyranny, Oppression, or Injustice, in a Prince; or that easily tended to make a free, and happy People, *Slaves*, and *miserable*. No: People may make themselves as wretched as they will; but let not God be called into that wicked Party. When Force, and Violence, and hard Necessity, have brought the Yoak of Servitude upon a People's Neck, Religion will supply them with a patient and submissive Spirit under it, till they can innocently shake it off: But certainly Religion never puts it on. This always was, and this at present is, my Judgment of these Matters: And I would be transmitted to Posterity (for the little Share of Time such Names as mine can live) under the Character of one who loved his Country, and would be thought a *good Englishman*, as well as a *good Clergyman*.



This Character I thought would be transmitted, by the following Sermons, which were made for, and preached in a private Audience, when I could think of nothing else but doing my Duty on the Occasions that were then offered by God's Providence, without any Manner of Design of making them publick : And, for that Reason, I give them now, as they were then delivered. By which I hope to satisfy those People who have objected a Change of Principles to Me, as if I were not now the same Man I formerly was. I never had but one Opinion of these Matters ; and that I think is so reasonable and well grounded, that I believe I never can have any other.

Another Reason of my publishing these Sermons, at this time, is, that I have a Mind to do my self some Honour, by doing what Honour I could to the Memory of two most excellent Princes, and who have very highly deserved at the Hands of all the People of these Dominions, who have any true Value for the *Protestant Religion* and the *Constitution* of the *English Government*, of which they were the great *Deliverers*, and *Defenders*. I have lived to see their illustrious Names very rudely handled, and the great Benefits they did this Nation, treated slightly and contemptuously. I have lived to see our Deliverance from *Arbitrary Power*, and *Popery*, traduced and vilified by some who formerly thought it was their greatest Merit, and made it Part of their Boast and Glory, to have had a little Hand and Share in bringing it about : And others who, without it, must have lived in Exile, Poverty, and Misery, meanly disclaiming it, and using ill the *Glorious Instrument* thereof. Who could expect such a Requital of such Merit ? I have, I own it, an Ambition of exempting my self from the Number of *unthankful* People. And as I loved and honoured those great Princes living, and lamented over them when dead, so I would gladly raise them up a Monument of Praise, as lasting as any Thing of mine can be ; and I choose to do it at this Time, when it is so unfashionable a Thing to speak honourably of them.

The Sermon that was preached upon the *Duke of Gloucester's* Death, was printed quickly after, and is now, because the Subject was so suitable, joined to the others. The Loss of that most promising and hopeful Prince was, at that Time, I saw, unspeakably great ; and many Accidents since have convinced us, that it could not have been over-valued. That precious Life, had it pleased God to have prolonged it to the usual Space, had saved us many Fears, and Jealousies, and dark Distrusts, and prevented many Alarms, that have long kept us, and will keep us still, waking and uneasy. Nothing remained to comfort and support us, under this heavy Stroke, but the Necessity it brought the King and Nation under, of settling the *Succession* in the House of HANOVER, and giving it an *Hereditary Right*, by *Act of Parliament*, as long as it continues *Protestant*. So much Good did God, in his merciful Providence, produce from a Misfortune, which we could never otherwise have sufficiently deplored.

The fourth Sermon was preached upon the *Queen's Accession* to the Throne, and in the first Year in which that Day was solemnly observed (for by some Accident or other, it had been over-looked the Year before) and every one will see, without the Date of it, that it was preached very early in this Reign, since I was able only to *promise* and *presage* its future Glories and Successes, from the good Appearances of Things, and the happy Turn our Affairs began to take ; and could not then count up the Victories and Triumphs that, for seven Years after, made it, in the Prophet's Language, *a Name, and a Praise among all the People of the Earth*. Never did seven such Years together pass over the Head of any *English Monarch*, nor cover it with so much Honour : The Crown and Sceptre seemed to be the *Queen's* least Ornaments. Those, other Princes wore in common with her : And Her great Personal Virtues were the same before, and since. But such was the Fame of Her Administration of Affairs at home ; such was the Reputation of Her Wisdom and Felicity in choosing Ministers ; and such was then esteemed their Faithfulness and Zeal, their Diligence and great Abilities in executing Her



Her Commands : To such a Height of military Glory did Her Great *General* and Her *Armies* carry the *British* Name abroad : Such was the Harmony and Concord betwixt Her and Her *Allies* : And such was the Blessing of God upon all Her Counsels and Undertakings, that I am as sure as History can make me, no Prince of Ours was ever yet so prosperous and successful, so loved, esteemed, and honoured, by their Subjects and their Friends, nor near so formidable to their Enemies. We were, as all the World imagined then, just entering on the Ways that promised to lead to such a Peace, as would have answered all the Prayers of our religious Queen, the Care and Vigilance of a most able Ministry, the Payments of a willing and obedient People, as well as all the glorious Toils and Hazards of the Soldiery ; when God, for our Sins, permitted *the Spirit of Discord* to go forth, and, by troubling sore the Camp, the City, and the Country, (and oh that it had altogether spared the Places sacred to his Worship !) to spoil, for a Time, this beautiful and pleasing Prospect ; and give us, in its Stead, I know not what—Our Enemies will tell the rest with Pleasure. It will become me better to pray to God to restore us to the Power of obtaining such a Peace, as will be to his Glory, the Safety, Honour and the Welfare of the Queen and Her Dominions, and the general Satisfaction of all Her High and Mighty Allies.

MAY 2, 1712.



A

## S E R M O N

Preached on the Death of Queen MARY, at St. *Au-*  
*stins*, in 1694.

2 CHRON. Chap. XXXV. Part of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Verses.

*And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah, and Jeremiah lamented for Josiah.*

**T**H E Mourning for this good Prince was so great, so universal, and unfeigned, that it became a Pattern to the future Times, and the Standard, as it were, for publick Sorrows; insomuch that when the Spirit of God would describe the greatest Mourning, by the Prophet *Zachariah*, chap. xii. after he has said—*They shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in Bitterness for him, as one that is in Bitterness for his First-born*: As if this were yet too little, the Prophet adds in the 11<sup>th</sup> Verse, *In that Day, there shall be a great Mourning in Jerusalem, as the Mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Valley of Megiddon*, which was the Place where good *Josiah* received his Death's Wound. The Foundation of this is laid down in the Words of the Text, *And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah, and Jeremiah lamented for him*. All in a Word, of whatsoever Place, City or Country, State and Quality, that either loved their Nation or Religion, *mourned for Josiah*. *Josiah* was the good Son of a very bad Father, a young and vain Creature, that sold himself to Wickedness, that *sacrificed to all the carved Images*, and *trespassed more and more*, and was cut off untimely by his own Servants, whose Death was indeed most justly *revenged* by the People of the Land, but not *lamented*. *Josiah*, contrary to all this, *while he was yet young, began to seek after the God of David his Father* (not of his Father *Amon*) *and did that which was right in the Sight of the Lord, and declined neither to the right Hand nor to the left*; He destroyed Idolatry, and took Order for the repairing of the Temple of God. *The King also stood in his Place, and made a Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his Commandments and his Testimonies and his Statutes with all his Heart and with all his Soul, to perform the Words of the Covenant which are written in the Book*. And lest his own Example should not be of Influence enough, he used his Regal Power, *and caused all that were present at Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it*. *And the Inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the Covenant of God, the God of their Fathers*. *And Josiah took away all the Abominations out of all the Countries, that pertained to the Children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel, to serve, even to serve the Lord their God*. *And all his Days they departed not from following the Lord the God of their Fathers*. These were the good things *Josiah* did; he was exceeding virtuous and religious himself, and he endeavoured,



voured, not only by Example, but by his Power and Authority, to make his People and Subjects so also. This moved them so unfeignedly and universally to mourn his Loss: But this was not all, for the People knew that God had threatned dreadful Evils to all the Nation, and respited them only for *Josiah's* Sake. *Behold, saith the Lord, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy Grave in Peace, neither shall thine Eyes see all the Evil that I will bring upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants of the same.* And knowing this, they could not choose but be concerned exceedingly for his Death. They were greatly blessed and benefited by his Life, and were like to suffer greatly by his Death. No Wonder therefore, if *Jerusalem* and *Judah*, *Jeremiah*, and all good People, mourned and lamented for *Josiah*. A good King is of inestimable Value: And the Truth of it is, these poor People had had so many bad, or at least indifferent ones, that a worser Prince by a great deal than *Josiah*, would have made a good Figure, and have been both beloved whilst living, and bewailed when dead. For it was with *Judah*, as it is with other Nations; such as the King is, such will, generally, the People be. Under an idolatrous Prince, the People usually inclined to be idolatrous; and when a Prince did *that which was right in the Sight of the Lord*, the People generally conformed and did the same. This shews, of what Advantage and Importance it is, to have a virtuous and religious Prince upon the Throne. It is, in a Manner, crowning Virtue and Religion with him; for they will also reign as well as he. Even they who are truly good and virtuous upon Principles, and would be so, in spite of all Discouragement, of Custom, and Example, of Scorn, Dishonour, and, it may be, to their great Loss, even these are bettered by a good Example from above; they prosecute their good Designs, they continue in their virtuous Courses, with much more Joy, more Heart and Life, when so encouraged. The Cold, the Lukewarm and Indifferent, are heated often, by a great Example, into a generous Emulation, and rise up to a Pitch above themselves. Even they who are by Inclination wicked, rude, and irreligious, do yet learn Decency, Civility, and some good Manners, from a great Example. The Countenance that Piety and good Morality find from great Superiours, restrains a great many brutal Outrages that would be offered to them both, by vile Inferiours, and keeps some Men from impudent and scandalous Offences; so that the Face of Honesty and Goodness is kept up, where there is nothing of the Substance left; which good Appearance is not wholly useles. No one can say (I doubt) that a good Example is of equal Power and Influence with a bad one; for the Corruption of our Heart is great, and stronger are our Inclinations to Evil than Good, and it is easier much to dissemble being virtuous and religious, than to be truly such; but a good Example does not want much of the Power and Influence of a bad one, as to Mens external and publick Behaviour; They will be as careful to *appear* religious (if Religion be encouraged by the Example and publick Practice of the Prince) as they would be ready to be *indeed wicked*, were the Prince so, and would encourage them to follow him. So that next to the being truly virtuous and religious, it were for the Good of a Nation, that a Prince would outwardly at least *appear* so, even for Example's Sake, and I mean his own Good as well as that of his People, even the Prosperity of his Affairs. And if the very Countenance, and Face of Virtue, and Religion be of such Use, what would the Truth and Substance of them do? It is on this Account, I think, that we are bid so often to make Prayers and Supplications for Kings and Governours, the Welfare of the World depends so much in general on their Virtue and Goodness. It is not for a Compliment of Honour, nor for their Sakes alone, that we are bid to pray continually, that God would *so replenish our Princes with the Grace of his holy Spirit, that they may always incline to his Will, and walk in his Way; that he would endue them plenteously with his heavenly Gifts, and enrich them with his Grace.* It is not for their Sakes only,



but for our own also, that we thus pray. For it is by these his Gifts and Graces, we hope they will be enabled to make both themselves and us happy; that under them we may lead our Lives in all Godliness and Honesty, in Peace and Quiet. And what a fearful Condition are the People in, when they to whom they are entrusted, have not the Fear of God before them? When they who are ordained of God to be a Terror to evil Works, are a Terror to the Good? When they who by Appointment are the Ministers of God to us for Good, and Revengers to execute Wrath upon him that doeth Evil, and are ordained of God to attend continually upon this very thing, shall think of nothing less, but give themselves to all Injustice, Violence, and Oppression, and live as if the World of Subjects were their Slaves, and were not to be treated with Humanity and Equity? As if they utterly forgot, or rather never had thought upon, the very End of their Institution and Appointment, which is the Preservation of the World in Peace and Order, for *they are sent, saith St. Peter, 1 Epist. ii. 14. for the Punishment of evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.* It is undoubtedly, a heavy thing for People to fall into such Hands of Wickedness: To be governed by such Princes, as know not why they are the Princes of such a People, but because they were born of Princely Parents; and know no other use of Wealth and Power, but living vainly and luxuriously, and tyrannizing over innocent and quiet People: Such Princes do but ill resemble God, whose Ministers and Vicegerents they are on Earth; for he appoints them for the best of Ends and Purposes, the Good of their respective People; and when they leave considering and consulting that, they forget the principal End of God's Ordinance and Institution of Government. It is the greatest Praise and Honour we can pay to a religious, just, and virtuous Prince, to represent how odious both to God and all good Men, how mischievous to Mankind, and how destructive of the End of Government, a wicked and ungodly Prince is; for one is the Foil to the other, and sets him off with all Advantage: He is, as it were, the guardian Angel of his Kingdom, still watching over it for good, and still defending it from Mischief; whereas the other is but as an evil Spirit, powerful only to do Mischief, and doing it, most commonly, where he should do most Good, to innocent and honest People. The Consideration of these evil Governours, cannot chuse but raise the Character and Value of good ones; and by the universal and unfeigned Mourning for *Josiah*, we may conclude, without all Doubt and Scruple, that he was a good King, as well as a good Jew, that he was just and faithful to his Charge, a Lover of his Nation, and a true Father of his People, as well as a devout religious worshipper of God, and zealous for his Honour. For though whilst Princes live, and are in Power, the People are restrained by Fear, and Penal Laws (and that exceeding reasonably and justly) from speaking Evil of them; from outwardly expressing either their Hatred or Contempt of wicked and unrighteous Governours; although (I say) they are withheld from this (which would indeed destroy and put an End to all good Government) whilst Princes are alive, and well, yet when they come to die (as die they will, and fall like other Men) then it is utterly impossible to keep the Tongues of People in, or hinder them from shewing what they thought before: They will dissemble then no longer; Death equals them in this as well as other Respects, with every Body else; Men freely say their Minds of them, and give them Fame and Reputation as they think they have deserved. And I believe there is no certainer Indication of the Justice or Violence of a Reign past, than the Concern that is shewn at the Prince's Death, not by the external Garb and Fashion, the Colour, and Solemnity of Pace, and Countenance, but by the Voice and Sorrows of the People, which never will be universal and unfeigned, but when there is a true Occasion offered them, when they have lost a true Friend, a just, affectionate, and careful Governour. Such, I believe, there is no doubt, but that the universal Mourning for *Josiah*, shewed him to be: When *Judah*,  
and



and *Jerusalem*, and *Jeremiah* lamented for him, it will amply prove he was a good Prince, and one that studied much the Welfare of the Nation, and the City, as well as that he laid the Interests of Religion and God's Service and the Prophet, closely to his Heart; and this will also help to prove he was a good King. For there is nothing like Religion and the Fear of God, that makes Men careful of advancing and procuring the general Good and Benefit of Mankind; nothing inclines Men to consider more the Ends they are designed to answer and fulfil; nothing disposes them better to Justice and Mercy, to Temperance and Moderation, and all good Qualities that help to make good Governours. Religion does not always make Men wise with the Wisdom of this World, but yet Religion sets Men upon getting as much of that as they find necessary to the well discharging of their several Duties, and is consistent with Religion; and more than that will never be necessary; Religion will not make a King, nor suffer him to be, slothful and neglectful of the Means and Methods that are just and fit to procure the Advantage of his People. Religion will not barely permit, but it will excite him to such prudent and discreet Management as will suffice to make himself and People happy. As for that crafty Over-reach, that extraordinary Refinement upon Politics, that Readiness of promising every thing that is demanded, and that easiness of breaking all the Bonds and Oaths that tie Society, and keep this World in Peace and Order, I own Religion is an Enemy to this, and will not let a Prince engage in any such ungodly Wisdom. But few, if any, are the Kings that have miscarried through the Tenderneſs of being false to God or Man; of doing Violence to common Honesty, and Justice and Religion. This wicked Wisdom of this wicked World, has sometimes served a present Turn, it has sometimes delivered from a present, or impendent Mischiefe, and gained sometimes a wanted and desired Advantage. But this is for the present only: It does not serve them long; a little Time discovers the Deceit; and the rest of the World are but thereby the more alarmed, and cautioned into a Jealousy and Watchfulness against them. It is with Princes, as with private Men; one may deceive another, by Pretences of Sincerity and Truth, by fair and specious Promises, and by Appearance of great Honesty and Justice; he may deceive his Neighbour, credulous, and open-hearted, to his great Damage, it may be, his Undoing. But after all, this is not Wisdom, this is but a Fetch for the present, this Skill will fail him, in the next Experiment; all that have heard of his Dexterity, will shun the dealing with him; and apprehend themselves unsafe in such Man's Company, or they will treat with him with so much Watchfulness, such Sharpness and Suspicion, that he shall find himself discovered and laid open, unable to procure the Advantages he otherwise might reasonably have looked for, and be counted as a common Enemy. It is no otherwise (as far as such as we can see) with Kings and Princes: They who have shewn themselves unjust and violent, faithless and perjured once; are never trusted more, without Security and Pledge; they are looked upon as always ready to do what they have once done; and therefore all their Neighbours grow suspicious, deal with them constantly as if they were designing nought but Mischief, endeavouring to deprive them of the Power of doing it, whose *Will* they think is always bent that Way, and nothing wanting but the Opportunity. So that upon the Whole, a just, a virtuous and religious Prince, is like to find much better Terms, be better trusted and believed by all his Neighbours, in Confidence of such his Probity and Honour, than others, that have falsified their Faith, upon the most tremendous Oaths, on the most sacred solemn Ties and Obligations, by which a Man can bind his Soul, although he also give up cautionary Pledges with them; so advantageous a Thing is the very Reputation of Justice and Religion in a Prince. And therefore it is very rarely seen, that undissembled Virtue and Religion in a King, is not of great Advantage also to the People; by influencing him to Care and Tenderneſs, to Justice and to Mercy, and by reminding him, that *he* must also give Account  
to



to God, how well or ill he hath discharged his Duty. *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, and be instructed ye that are Judges of the Earth*, says the Psalmist, ii. 10. and that they might not be to seek, what Wisdom and Instruction here is meant, he bids them, *ver. 11. Serve the Lord with Fear. For the Fear of the Lord is truly Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding*, as well, or rather more in Kings, than other Men; because their being Good, is of such infinite Concern to all the World. The thing I have been shewing you, is this, that *Josiah* was, in all Probability, a good, a just and virtuous Prince, as well as a religious one; and though it is not so expressed, yet being so remarkably religious, I could not help concluding he was therefore just and virtuous; because Religion and the Fear of God do so naturally, and almost necessarily, excite Men to the Practice of those, and all other Virtues, that are requisite to the full and due Discharge of all their several Obligations to Mankind; and from that universal and unfeigned Sorrow and Concern shewed by the Nation at his Death. The Loss of this good Prince was also made much heavier, by the Consideration of the Rarity and Scarcity of good Princes; *Judah* indeed fared better in this Point than *Israel*, much; but *Judah* had but little Cause of boasting. *Augustus*, it is said, designed *Tiberius* for his Successor, that all the World might want him, and lament his Death; which they both did, and had great Cause to do, for many Years. It is a sharp Reproach to any present Age, to hear Men call for, and commend the former. This Mischief even good Princes do occasionally; by blessing so their own, they make the Times to come less tolerable. This also it is that gives them a second Fame and Reputation; this makes their Loss so great and heavy. All Sorrows (if we mark it) both begin and end at home in Self-Love: All our Concern proceeds from apprehending a Loss of something Good, or from Fear of something Evil; and Good and Evil to our selves, though may be, at some Distance, for our Posterity is also Part of our selves. In the Instance before us, it is evident that the fearful Consideration of the Evils to come, threatned from God by *Huldah* the Prophetess, and respited alone for good *Josiah's* Sake, must needs increase their Sorrow for his Death; they lost the Pledge of their Security and Preservation in him: Upon his single Life hung all their Hopes of Safety. How strong a Motive should this be, to make and keep a Prince just, virtuous, and religious, when for the Sake of such, God will suspend at least, sometimes remove, his Judgments justly threatned to a wicked People? And how great Reason does this afford to People, to wish, and pray, their Kings may be just such as God describes them; 2 *Sam. xxiii. 3. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over Men, must be just, ruling in the Fear of God.* And how great Cause of Sorrow and Lamenting does the Loss of such a Prince afford? And I believe it will be no ill Guess, nor far from Truth, to think the Spirit of God recorded, by the Author of these Books, the solemn and the general Mourning of the Land and its Inhabitants, for this good King, with some Design of provoking other Kings to imitate his good Qualities. I am sure it is a Use that they should make of such a memorable Passage. For besides the great Advantages (that I have mentioned) which both themselves and Subjects reap from their being good and virtuous and religious, it is also the readiest and the surest Way to Fame and Immortality of Honour here in this World. And this is a Consideration that, more or less, prevails with all Princes. And indeed they have such a Share of Fame, among Posterity, that they ought to take good heed what kind of Fame it is. For after such a Number of Years are past, and Men forget Particulars, the general Good or Evil of the Times they lived in, mark their Reigns for Good or Evil; and Men, to ease their Memories, call them the Happy or Unhappy Reigns of such and such Kings. Now nothing gives, nothing establishes a better Reputation to a Prince, than Justice, Virtue, and Religion. Great Victories, and glorious Triumphs over conquered Nations, give the Life of Fame; but this is a Fame Men make Ex-ceptions



Exceptions to ; Posterity will call in Question these Proceedings ; the conquered Nations call them Tyrannies, and Usurpations, unjust Invasions, mighty Robberies, and Princely Villanies ; there will be still disputing about the Fame and Reputation of these great Names, and still the just, the quiet, the sober, and the unambitious Part of Mankind will be inclined to pity the Distressed, and to condemn the bold Disturbers of the Quiet and Repose of Kingdoms. Whereas the Fame of being just, and virtuous, and religious, is assented to by all ; is undisputed, forwarded, increased, admired, and loved by every one ; it gains all Parties, makes Amends for great Miscarriages, is talked of, and remembred with Delight and Satisfaction. The Way to the Temple of Honour, lay, of old, through the Temple of Virtue ; and so I believe and hope it will always do : The Fame of being virtuous and religious, as it is better grounded, so it is surer, and will last much longer, than that of being any thing besides, and is much easier to be purchased. This Princes would do well to think on ; as they desire to be delivered to Posterity, so they must e'en behave themselves to the present Age they live in : For however ready People are to flatter and applaud the Acts of *living Kings*, yet few regard *the Dead* ; or are afraid to speak the Truth of such as neither can reward nor punish. This is a Use that Kings may make of this so general undissembled Sorrow for the Death of a good and godly King, recorded so particularly in holy Scriptures ; who, since they are ambitious generally of a good Fame, as well as *great*, may find the readiest and the nearest Way to it, lies by Justice, Virtue, and Religion.—I have been all this while describing a Prince of extraordinary Qualities, one that set out exceeding early in the Ways of Goodness, and held that Course to his Life's End ; one that destroyed the Worship of carved Images, and took great Care to repair the Temple of the true God ; one that redeemed the Law, and restored it to its old Dominion ; that made a Covenant with God, himself, to live as became a good Prince, and one that used his Regal Authority to cause his Servants and Subjects to do the like, if his Example wrought not with them : And one, that when he died, was universally and most unfeignedly lamented by all *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, and *Jeremiah* ; by all the City, and the Country, and by the Prophets of the Lord. And, I believe, I am prevented in the Application, by almost every one that hears me. The Parallel is so exact, that whilst I have been talking of *Josiah*, I know you have been thinking of *the QUEEN*. *Edward* the VI. has been most generally called the *Good Josiah*. And there was indeed a great Resemblance betwixt them for the Years that *Edward* lived. But he died betimes : And there is great Difference betwixt a very promising and hopeful Prince of Sixteen, and one that lived to a mature Age with the free Exercise of Regal Power. And besides, his Innocence, his sweet and easie Temper, became a Prey to a most sacrilegious and rapacious Generation of Men, which in some Measure helped to mitigate the Universal Sorrow that his Death occasioned ; although that fatal Breach let in a Sea of Blood and Misery upon this poor Kingdom, and gave it such a Taste of the severe Vengeance that a superstitious Worship of God returning home in Triumph, from a six Years Exile and Ejectment, both required and took, that I heartily hope it never will forget. But there is a more exact Conformity betwixt *Josiah*, and the present Subject of our Sorrows, than any Prince besides we have ever had. Her Heart, like his, was early set to seek God ; and we have seen in Her, the Truth of what that God tells us, that *they who seek him early, find him*. For she has never yet deceived the Hopes that a severely virtuous and religious Education gave us ; nor once occasioned a suspicious Fear in any of her Friends. But on the contrary, shone out, continually, a fair and great Example to the whole Nation, of a most firm, sincere, and unaffected Piety towards God. Nor was she satisfied to do her Duty single and alone, but, as the Mistress of a large and numerous Family,



took Care that all who any ways depended on her, should worship God, as well as she herself; She did not only give them her Example, and Opportunity of Place and Time, but laid Restraint upon them, used her Authority and Power to make them at least appear, as frequent at, and serious in Devotions, as they truly ought to be. She took away the Scandal and Reproach that long had lain upon the Court, the Want of good Example in a Prince. I should be loth to raise her Character at any one's Expence or Cost: Besides, Her Virtue and Devotion stand in need of no Advantage, by Comparison. I dare not think that such Degrees of Goodness are so absolutely necessary to every private Christian, much less to every Prince, that without them, they may not be, through God's Mercy, both good and happy People. And therefore I have no Design to represent her otherwise than imitable by every private Christian; I am not inclined to say one Word, but what I think you all believe before-hand. The Place we stand in, and the Men we are, forbid us to *invent*, or speak Uncertainties, or any thing that will not some ways tend to Edification. Nor is there Need of any thing besides; for we are able, with good Assurance, to present to all her People, a young, a beautiful, and powerful Queen, a perfect Pattern for their Imitation, in all that is exactly virtuous or religious. Her Station was so much maligned, that, hearing nothing of this Head, from the most scrupulously Curious nice Observers of her Life, we ought in Reason to conclude her truly holy and unblameable to all the World; and God alone can see into the Heart. The External of a Man, is only known to Man, and that alone can be proposed to Imitation. And therefore, e'er I leave this Head, I wish I might effectually recommend her publick outward Carriage in the House of God, to all this Audience, and especially to those of her own Sex. It was so decent, unaffectedly devout, so grave, so serious, and composed, that it is fit for every one to think on, and to reform that light and gay Behaviour that is much too common in these Places. She knew the Eyes of all were oft intent upon her, and therefore took all Heed to give a good Example; but knew moreover she herself was more immediately in God's Presence, and therefore so behaved herself, as best becomes an humble Suppliant, before the Throne of his adorable all-powerful Majesty. These things become us to commend, because they are so fit for private Imitation; frequent Attendance upon God's Service, and a religious grave Deportment there, are Duties by Command; and it is not much to hope they may be greatly promoted by so extraordinary an Example. But these, and a great many more good Qualities that I may not now concern my self, or you withal, shew us how great and universal our Loss is; and greater yet is like to be, if we will make no use of her Example, *for then we have lost her quite*. The Imitation of the commendable Qualities of the Dead, is all the Advantage that the living ones can make of them: And it is but common Wisdom to provide and see, that they do not leave us Sorrow and Affliction only, when they have done their best to leave us Virtue and Religion also, if we will pursue them in their Steps. But here I hope the Parallel will end, and that our Sorrows have but one Foundation; whereas the Sorrows of the *Jews* had two, and the latter very dreadful. *Josiah* was an excellently virtuous and religious Prince, and did a World of Good while he lived, which ended with him: The Remembrance of this, might well occasion great and universal Mourning for him; the Death of a good and godly Prince is an inestimable Loss, and inexpressible. But then his Death let in a World of Misery, it let in old Idolatry and fearful Superstition, it let in a most woeful Destruction of the City, and a long and sad Captivity of the People. This frightful Prospect both the Prophet and the People had, and knew that God had spared them whilst *Josiah* lived, but then resolved to execute his Vengeance to the full; this made his Life so dear and valuable, and this occasioned him when dead, to be lamented with such Bitterness and Anguish. Here we are full of Hope the Parallel will break off and fail. Our Prospect forward is not, God be praised, so black and



and dreadful. Our Sorrows are as just and due for what is lost and gone, as those of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, but not our Fears for what we have in View. We are not so bewildred and entangled yet in our Affairs, but we can see our Way out, though obscurely and by a glimmering Light, if we provoke not God to strike us deeper. Our Case is hazardous enough to give us Fears, not faint, nor very distant, nor uncertain; but strong and reasonable, and near enough to make us careful, diligent, and watchful, to set us upon thinking, and providing against threatned Evils; but most especially to stir us up to Union and Agreement, to settle Peace and Quietness at home, that we may have but one thing to attend to, one Danger to eschew, and to provide against, namely, the *common Enemy*; who, without Question, makes Account to improve the sad Occasion of our Mourning, to his Advantage, and our utter Ruin. But let us shew him we are fully sensible our Loss is great enough, without any Augmentation he shall make; and that we will not help him, as he hopes, by our Divisions, to make our selves more miserable than we now are, or need to be. God does not, that we know, intend our Ruin, but Amendment; we still have Pledges of his Love remaining with us; and therefore have no Cause to doubt his farther Favours; if we will set about deserving them. All we have therefore left to do, is to humble our selves under the mighty Hand of God, to deprecate his farther Anger and Displeasure, to make the Use that he intends by this Infliction, to call to Mind our evil Ways, our Sins, and Provocations, to repent us truly and sincerely of them, and shew we do so, by our leaving them, and taking up with better things for the Time to come, and to implore the Assistance of his Grace to put these good Designs in Execution.

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A

# S E R M O N

On the Death of the most hopeful Prince W I L L I A M  
Duke of G L O U C E S T E R.

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The P R E F A C E that was prefixed to this S E R M O N, when  
it was first published by itself.

**I** Give this Sermon up to the Desires of a great many good People of the Parishes of *St. Austin*, and *St. Dunstan* in the West, to whom I can deny nothing of this Nature, which they shall find reasonable to ask of me: But not to their Desires only, but also to the Hopes I have, that, from something or other hinted at in it, other Wise and Virtuous People may be put upon considering, whereabouts we are; and on contributing all that lies in them, to the preventing whatever Evils we may apprehend from the great Loss we have sustained in the Death of the most Noble and most Hopeful Prince, the Duke of GLOUCESTER. I know, I have no other Aims than these, in making this Sermon Publick; and they who know me well, will, I believe, think so too: I undertake not therefore to defend the Irregularity of some of my Thoughts, nor the Order in which they are ranged. They were produced in Grief and deep Concern, and that, I think, may in some sort, excuse them with tender and good-natured People. I am only careful of guarding against Two Sorts of Men; First, Such as will needs call this great Misfortune, a Judgment of God, for what hath passed amongst us. Secondly, Such as will certainly try to make it one, as soon as ever they can. To the first, we must freely own, we have deserved God's greatest Judgments,



ments, but not for the Causes they assign; and freely own, that this Misfortune has the Face of one, and is as heavy as a Judgment; and therefore I hope all People will improve under it, and make as good use of it, as if it were indeed a Judgment. But till they shall produce some certain and impartial Rules by which they proceed in forming Censures, and in applying them to Nations, or to private People, they will give us leave, I hope, to suspend. And to the Second Sort, who think to turn a Kingdom into a Commonwealth, I can only say, that I hope, the Extent of our Dominions, the Number of our Nobility, the Honour of our Gentry, the Genius of our People, and the whole Current of our Laws, will always provide us with a ready Answer to an impudent and clamorous Faction. God, I hope, will evermore preserve us from a Species of Government, as ill fitted for our Nation, as Popery is for our Religion.

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PSALM CXLVI. Ver. 3, 4, 5.

*O put not your Trust in Princes, nor in any Child of Man, for there is no Help in them.*

*For when the Breath of Man goeth forth, he shall turn again to his Earth, and then all his Thoughts perish.*

*Blessed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his Help, and whose Hope is in the Lord his God.*

**W**E know not who it was, that composed this *Psalms*, nor what it was that occasioned it. But the Providence of God furnishes all People, with Occasions more than enow, of applying these Words to themselves, but too too pertinently. It hath furnished *Us* with one, not many Years ago, so very proper, that it gives fresh and lively Pain, to every one that remembers it with half the Consideration it deserves. It furnishes us *now* with another, of which no living Man, perhaps, can see the Consequence at full, but every one can see enough to drive him to Sorrow and Amazement, and cause him to say, with the Psalmist, *The Lord is King, the Earth may be glad thereof, yea the Multitude of the Isles may be glad thereof*: Glad, that their Affairs are in the Hands of him, who *has* all Power, and *is* all Wisdom, and all Goodness; who bringeth Light out of Darkness, Good out of Evil, and can turn every thing to their Advantage, who serve him truly.

Whether it were, that the Psalmist here directs himself against the common Inclination of Men, which is, to build great Hopes upon the Promises of Princes and great Men, and rather to depend on them, than on God above, who keepeth his Promise for ever; or whether the Death of some great Prince, had given the *Jews*, in their Captivity, some mighty Disappointment; whatever it was, that occasioned the composing this Psalm, it is plain the Words of the Text advise us, *First*, Not to put our Trust in Princes, nor in any Child of Man: And that for this Reason, *There is no Help in them, because when the Breath of Man goeth forth, he shall turn again to his Earth, and all his Thoughts perish*. Secondly, They direct us where we are to place our Trust and Confidence, and that is in God; *Blessed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his Help, and whose Hope is in the Lord his God*.

I. Of the Persons in whom we are *not* to place our Trust and Confidence, and they are *Princes*; *Put not your Trust in Princes, i. e.* in no Body, no Child of Man; for if you might in any Body, you might in *them*, because they have most Power, and more Opportunities, of answering to your Confidence, than any Men besides. I see no Reason to think that any thing is here said to the Disparagement of Princes, as though they were to be trusted less than other Men, for Falseness, or Forgetfulness of Promises;



Promises; and therefore to *trust*, is not here put for *believing*: But they are rather here considered, as the faithfullest, as well as the most powerful Managers of human Affairs, of the best Inventions, as well as greatest Abilities, both to design and execute great Matters: And yet, not to be entirely depended on, for other Reasons. It is much the same that is expressed in *Psalm cxviii.* 8, 9. *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any Confidence in Man. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any Confidence in Princes, i. e.* the chiefest and the best of Men: And the Reason here assigned, why they are not so to be trusted and depended on, namely, because they are so subject to Death, delivers them from all Suspicion of Blame. *To put our Trust* therefore *in Princes*, does in this Place signify, to think the Settlement of their Affairs so strong and sure, that nothing can disturb them; to trust so to the Wisdom of their Management, their Valour and their Might, their good Intentions, and their great Abilities, as to be quite secure, and to suspect no Change can happen; it either signifies this Confidence, which is innocent, though inconsiderate; or this Confidence with Impiety, trusting in the Arm of Flesh alone, and vaunting with the foolish Man, who saith in his Heart, *Trust, I shall never be moved, no Harm shall happen to me.* If the Trust that is here dissuaded from, be contrary to, or exclusive of, that Trust we always ought to put in God, then to be sure it is condemned, and sinful; but if it be only a weak and groundless Trust, then there is less Offence than Folly in it, and the heavy Disappointments it must needs meet, will punish it sufficiently. Sometimes we see a Prince truly noble, just, and merciful, wise and brave, a Father of his Country, a Lover of his People, careful of all their Interests and their Honour, and born, as it were, to the Good of Mankind: It would be impossible not to put great Confidence in such a Prince, and to hope a Nation will be happy under such Administration, whilst he lives; this sort of Trust is reasonable, because it is built upon so good Ground. Another Time, we see a Prince of beauteous Aspect, lovely Disposition, inclined to Learning, Virtue, Piety, and full of all good Qualities; it would be Stupidity not to hope well of him, and to promise our selves a Harvest answerable to a Field of so fair Shew: Such hope and Confidence as this, becomes us, as we are reasonable and considering Creatures; and it would be a kind of Ingratitude to God, from whom we acknowledge all these Gifts and Graces come, not to conceive such Hopes as such excellent Endowments promise. A Man must shut his Eyes on Providence, that will not make his Observations on what passes, and collect what is most reasonable and likely. For since God acts by reasonable Causes, and procures our Peace and Happiness by Instruments that are in Nature proper for that purpose, we owe it to him, to expect it from them where they are so promising. This is properly to trust in God; for to look for *Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles*, is to hope against Nature, and against Reason, and not to be excused by any Reverence we pretend to God, or Dependence on his Power, though he is truly able to produce those Fruits from those unnatural Stocks. The Men of no Religion, and no Thought, are so intent upon these *second* Causes, that they see no *first*, nor will acknowledge any supreme Power, that overlooks and governs our Affairs, but governs them by Nature and by Reason: But they who trust to one, still in Subordination to the other, in constant Dependence on him, and always in his Power to change and suspend, as he sees fit, do truly put their Trust in God, even when they put their Trust in Princes. They look for Rest and Security in Peace, where Kings are virtuous, wise, and watchful, and the People are at Unity; for Victory in War, where Generals are brave and wary, the Soldiers healthy, numerous, obedient, and courageous, and well paid, *i. e.* they promise to themselves the natural Effects of Wisdom, Strength, and Concord; but all from God, who is to bless these natural and these moral Causes. They look for plenteous Harvests, where the Fields are full and flourishing, but know, it is God that made them so, and he that is to bring



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I. Of the Persons in whom we are *not* to place our Trust and Confidence, and they are *Princes*; *Put not your Trust in Princes, i. e.* in no Body, no Child of Man; for if you might in any Body, you might in *them*, because they have most Power, and more Opportunities, of answering to your Confidence, than any Men besides. I see no Reason to think that any thing is here said to the Disparagement of Princes, as though they were to be trusted less than other Men, for Falshood, or Forgetfulness of Promises;



Promises; and therefore to *trust*, is not here put for *believing*: But they are rather here considered, as the faithfullest, as well as the most powerful Managers of human Affairs, of the best Inventions, as well as greatest Abilities, both to design and execute great Matters: And yet, not to be entirely depended on, for other Reasons. It is much the same that is expressed in *Psalms* cxviii. 8, 9. *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any Confidence in Man. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any Confidence in Princes, i. e.* the chiefest and the best of Men: And the Reason here assigned, why they are not so to be trusted and depended on, namely, because they are so subject to Death, delivers them from all Suspicion of Blame. *To put our Trust* therefore *in Princes*, does in this Place signify, to think the Settlement of their Affairs so strong and sure, that nothing can disturb them; to trust so to the Wisdom of their Management, their Valour and their Might, their good Intentions, and their great Abilities, as to be quite secure, and to suspect no Change can happen; it either signifies this Confidence, which is innocent, though inconsiderate; or this Confidence with Impiety, trusting in the Arm of Flesh alone, and vaunting with the foolish Man, who saith in his Heart, *Trust, I shall never be moved, no Harm shall happen to me.* If the Trust that is here dissuaded from, be contrary to, or exclusive of, that Trust we always ought to put in God, then to be sure it is condemned, and sinful; but if it be only a weak and groundless Trust, then there is less Offence than Folly in it, and the heavy Disappointments it must needs meet, will punish it sufficiently. Sometimes we see a Prince truly noble, just, and merciful, wise and brave, a Father of his Country, a Lover of his People, careful of all their Interests and their Honour, and born, as it were, to the Good of Mankind: It would be impossible not to put great Confidence in such a Prince, and to hope a Nation will be happy under such Administration, whilst he lives; this sort of Trust is reasonable, because it is built upon so good Ground. Another Time, we see a Prince of beauteous Aspect, lovely Disposition, inclined to Learning, Virtue, Piety, and full of all good Qualities; it would be Stupidity not to hope well of him, and to promise our selves a Harvest answerable to a Field of so fair Shew: Such hope and Confidence as this, becomes us, as we are reasonable and considering Creatures; and it would be a kind of Ingratitude to God, from whom we acknowledge all these Gifts and Graces come, not to conceive such Hopes as such excellent Endowments promise. A Man must shut his Eyes on Providence, that will not make his Observations on what passes, and collect what is most reasonable and likely. For since God acts by reasonable Causes, and procures our Peace and Happiness by Instruments that are in Nature proper for that purpose, we owe it to him, to expect it from them where they are so promising. This is properly to trust in God; for to look for *Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles*, is to hope against Nature, and against Reason, and not to be excused by any Reverence we pretend to God, or Dependance on his Power, though he is truly able to produce those Fruits from those unnatural Stocks. The Men of no Religion, and no Thought, are so intent upon these *second* Causes, that they see no *first*, nor will acknowledge any supreme Power, that overlooks and governs our Affairs, but governs them by Nature and by Reason: But they who trust to one, still in Subordination to the other, in constant Dependance on him, and always in his Power to change and suspend, as he sees fit, do truly put their Trust in God, even when they put their Trust in Princes. They look for Rest and Security in Peace, where Kings are virtuous, wise, and watchful, and the People are at Unity; for Victory in War, where Generals are brave and wary, the Soldiers healthy, numerous, obedient, and courageous, and well paid, *i. e.* they promise to themselves the natural Effects of Wisdom, Strength, and Concord; but all from God, who is to bless these natural and these moral Causes. They look for plenteous Harvests, where the Fields are full and flourishing, but know, it is God that made them so, and he that is to bring



them in. This Confidence he does himself raise in us, and therefore never is offended with it, because it is built upon the Confidence we have, that he will suffer things to go on orderly and naturally, unless we provoke him to change or suspend the common Course of them. And though our Disappointments are very great, and very many, yet might our Hopes and Expectations be very reasonable and just, and are not to be condemned by an unhappy Issue. If our Trust in *Princes* exclude not our Trust in *God*, we need not be afraid it will be faulty: Nor does the Psalmist here condemn such Trust, for its Impiety, but rather, (for the avoiding troublesome and heavy Disappointments) would dissuade us from putting so much Trust in Princes, whose Lives are so uncertain, and look up to God more ardently and frequently, whose Mercy, and Goodness, like himself (they are himself) endure for ever. I think, it is a kind Advice, not to raise in our Minds, Hopes that are so easily defeated, and when defeated, so vexatious and afflicting. *Put not your Trust in Princes, nor in any Child of Man, for there is no Help in them.* There is no Help in Man, in many Cases; a thousand and ten thousand Evils befall us, wherein the Wisdom, Skill, the Riches, and the Strength of all Mankind, can give no Help, afford no Comfort. If we want Rain, or have too much of it, can all the World procure a Shower, or hinder it from falling? Can it procure a favourable Wind, or hinder a contrary one from blowing? Can it recover Health, where it is wanting, to the Good of Thousands; or restore a precious Life, that is, like *David's*, worth ten Thousand? The utmost of human Power, for ought that appears, is but an Ability of doing huge Mischief; and the best of it, is an Ability of hindring one another from doing Mischief. But when we want Assistance, in most of our Extremities, oh how unable is this World to give it! The wisest, richest, and most powerful Men want Help themselves, and neither can afford it to themselves, nor others; there is indeed no Help in them. *For when the Breath of Man goeth forth, he shall return again to his Earth, and then all his Thoughts perish.* The very best is here supposed of the very ablest of them, that they may be full of good Intentions, form great and good Designs, have their Hearts wholly bent on honouring God, promoting Virtue, and profiting Mankind, seeking the Interest of their People, doing Justice, shewing Mercy, and imitating him, whose Ministers and Substitutes they are. Happy for them, that they are full of these Designs! No better Thoughts can possibly possess their Hearts, or employ their Hours; the King of Kings, the mighty Master of them all, shall bless them, and reward them, whom he finds so doing. But this is, much too often, all they do; they form a Multitude of brave Designs, and live to effect but few! *I have said ye are Gods, but ye shall die like Men*, and this they find, and we find also. Poor Princes, poor People: They raise our Hopes, and they destroy them suddenly. We gather up all our Trust, and place it on their Lives, and in a Day or two, those Lives are spilt like Water on the Ground. They are, as the Prophet calls them, *the Breath of our Nostrils*: And Nations sometimes seem to live in them, and only to breathe their Breath; and yet *their Breath goeth forth*, like other People's Breath, *and they return again to their Earth*, (their Earth as well as ours) *and then all their Thoughts perish*, and all our Thoughts too, with them: But not our Thoughtfulness; that still survives, to trouble every wise considering Man. Our Thoughts are in this Place our Hopes, and they expire with the Breath of him who kindled them. His Thoughts, who raised our Thoughts, perish, and therefore ours must perish with them. Who can enough esteem those Lives, which by Experience are found so useful to the World, to the securing its Tranquillity and Happiness; or those who from their earliest Infancy, have promised all the Good that Men can look for, from the most virtuous towardly Disposition, and whose precocious Advances, could not fail of giving us some jealous Fears, with our most lively Hopes! Who can enough esteem such Lives, if we consider these fine Qualities! And who can value them too little, or trust too little



in them, who considers how soon *their Breath goeth forth, and they return again to Earth, and all their Thoughts perish!* What must we do in this Uncertainty? Our Affairs require a Life as durable as Brass, and the Laws of our Mortality will admit of none, but what is subject to a thousand certain, and a thousand accidental Evils, each of which may break us all to pieces. Let us do any thing in this Uncertainty, but blame the Providence of God, who hangs the Good of so much People, on so small a Thread: For, righteous are his Ways, and just his Government, whatever we may fear, whatever we endure.

But may I not, unblamed, say with the Prophet, *Jerem. xii. 1.* (I know I say it with all Deference and Humility) *Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee, yet let me talk with Thee of thy Judgments:* When thou, in Mercy, turnedst away the Captivity of our *Zion*, we were like them that dream; when our Enemies were just upon us, *they stumbled and fell; then was our Mouth filled with Laughter, and our Tongue with Joy.* The greatest Enemies we had, could not forbear proclaiming, *The Lord hath done great things for them.* We could not our selves, in Gratitude, forbear proclaiming; *The Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoyce.*

Either to temper these Felicities, or punish our Ingratitude, Thou stoppedst up, for ever, the Breath of our Nostrils; *The anointed of the Lord was taken away from us, of whom we said, Under her Shadow we shall live* (not among the Heathen, but at home) *in Plenty and Security.*

To shew thou didst intend but to correct, and not to give us over unto Death, thou didst, by unexpected Instruments, deliver the Life of the King from Fear of the Enemy, and from the Snare of the Hunter; Thou savedst him from Destruction, and crownedst him with Mercy and loving Kindness; and madest him Instrumental in procuring the Desire of all our Hearts, an honourable Peace; the Opportunity of healing all our Wounds, recovering all our Losses, and making up the Breaches our intestine Foes, our foolish Discords, and ill-grounded Animosities had occasioned; the Opportunity of settling our Affairs, and looking to the Ground we stood upon; of putting them in such a Posture, that neither Enemies abroad, nor Enemies at home might give us any great Disturbance; that the Religion of our Country, and its most antient, properest, and best tempered Government, might be secured against the Attempts and Machinations of its old inveterate Enemies, the Sons of Violence and Darkeness, and from the Noisy Importunities of unexperienced, raw, new-fangled Schematists, and Speculators. But contrary to this, the Spirit of Discord is gone out among us, and the sweet Hope of all the Kingdom, is in a Moment, snatched away from us; e're we had Time to try to move thee, by our Prayers, or Time to apprehend a Stroke so painful and so mortal. Thy former Favours did not promise such Conclusion. But we will hold our Peace, since it is thy doing; We are much surer that thou mayest in Justice, thus chastise us for our Sins, than we could be that thou hadst so much Mercy for such Sinners, as we have, all our Lives, experienced from thee. Permit us never so long, to talk with thee of thy Judgments, yet must we still conclude, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when we plead with thee.*

Such Losses, and such heavy Disappointments, needs must prove effectual Cures of all our Confidence in Princes. Never were Hopes more justly raised, nor placed more reasonably, than ours have been, upon two noble Objects; and yet six Years have quite defeated them, dried up our Springs, and almost desolated a Royal Tribe, one of the fairest and most fruitful in the World. How short is our Prospect now! In what a little Compass is our Kingly Family contained! Two precious Lives make up our whole Treasure!

The People of the *East*, we find in Scriptures, addressed to their Princes, with—  
*O King, live for ever.* It is a vain Compliment to Men of Flesh and Blood, whose  
 Breath



Breath goeth forth so suddenly, who dye like other Men, who return again to their Earth, and whose Thoughts all perish in a Moment; but if it were ever reasonable, our Case would call for it, and *we* would use it. May God enlarge these Borders! Build to these Princes a sure House! And bind up their Souls in the Bundle of Life! A long one here for our Sakes, and, for their own, an everlasting one, in Heaven!

II. Let us now withdraw from this uncomfortable Side. The Lives of Princes are, it seems, like Lands of Darkness, where, every Step we make, is in Distrust and Fear: They give us little but Alarms, Defeats, and Disappointments. Let us seek a Country of more Light and Safety, where Hope dwells, and where we may abide with Confidence. *Blessed is he who hath the God of Jacob for his Help, and whose Hope is in the Lord his God.* This is a Life, and Will, and Power, we may depend upon; *Great is the Lord, and marvellous, worthy to be praised, there is no End of his Greatness. The Lord is good to all, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and his Dominion endureth throughout all Ages.* These are Foundations strong enough for all the Trust and Confidence a Heart can hold. He is of infinite Goodness to intend the Happiness of all his Creatures, of infinite Wisdom to know wherein it lies, and of infinite Power to effect his wise and good Designs towards us. Here, therefore, we may place our Trust, without any Fears or Disappointment: here we must fix our Hopes, for here we can only find our Help.

Were there not such a Power above, to overlook and govern Men, and their Affairs, what a Place of Misery and Confusion would this World be? What with the Certainty of natural Causes, working many sad Effects, though known before, yet unavoidable; what with the Multitude of fearful Accidents, never to be prevented nor foreseen; what with the Folly, Ignorance, Mistakes, the Malice and Perverseness, and the Rage of one another's Passions, how wretched a Thing would the Life of a Man be!

The ways of God, I think, are to permit natural Causes to work their natural Effects, according to the Powers he hath endued them with; reserving to himself the Power of altering or suspending them, as he sees fit, and when he pleases; and to suffer Men to act as free Agents, having given them Reason, and revealed his Will to them, and laid down all sufficient Motives, to restrain them from what they know is Evil, and to encourage them to what is truly Good; reserving to himself, however, the Power of changing their Inclinations, directing them in their Designs, and influencing them all, as he sees fit. By which Means, neither the Certainty of natural Operations, nor the Freedom of Man's Will exclude his Government of Men and Nature, nor hinder us from addressing to him, by *Prayer*, for what we want, and *Praise* for what we have received; both which would be in vain, were Nature not to be diverted from her Way, nor the Will of Man flexible, by some superiour over-ruling Power. Were Nature's Course unalterably fixt, and the Will of Men not to be moved, Prayer would be insignificant and useless. Were not Men at Liberty, in general, they could not be accountable for what they did, they could have neither Vice nor Virtue. Were not the Laws of Nature fixt, we could not live in any sort of Certainty, we could not undertake any thing, nor could have any Hope or Expectation of succeeding. But as it pleases God to govern by these two known Rules, and to be still the Master of them both, there is all the Room that can be for our Endeavours, Care and Vigilance, our Virtue, and our Studies, and all the Reason and Grounds for our applying to him, our trusting in him, and Dependence upon him. Our Hope and Trust in God, must therefore be directed by these settled and established Rules of Providence. These are the known and standing Laws of his wise Government; the rest is Dispensation, Favour, Grace, and sometimes Miracle. Dispensation, Grace and Favour, we may innocently hope for, pray for, and expect, from his indulgent Goodness, where no established Law of Nature is subverted; but for a Miracle, it is much more reasonable to wish for,  
than



than expect, one in our Favour. We know that nothing is impossible with God, but yet our Hope is never equal to his Power; nor do we ever trust in him for any thing uncommon, without some Promise in particular. We know it is as possible for God to restore again the Dead to Life, as Health to a diseased Man; what is the Reason, then, that we do not importune him with our most earnest and united Prayers, to give us back that dear, inestimable Life we have so lately parted with, but that we think he signifies his Will and Pleasure to us, by the known stated Course of Nature, and know we have no Reason to look for Miracles? Death would not give us such Despair immediately, but that we measure the Power of God, by the common Exercise of it, in the World. And so it is with putting our Trust in him; we can carry it no further than he gives us Leave, by his common Rules, or by particular Promise. When therefore the *Psalmist* would invite us to *hope in God*, and *put our Trust in him*, he would not have us raise in our selves Expectations of Things strangely unusual and unlikely; nor to believe that God will do for us, or bring to pass, whatever we expect or wish for, or what we think we want. But we may hope, and trust in him, for every Thing, that is in it self reasonable, and fit for him to give, and for us to receive.

Our Passions often put us upon asking, what is not in it self very reasonable to expect; no matter, provided it be nothing wicked and forbidden, and nothing to the Prejudice and Injury of any one else. Our Parents, and our Friends, live here, even beyond the common Term of human Life, and we yet desire of God, they may continue longer with us, and we may hope that he will hear our Prayers: This does not seem very reasonable, when we consider the Life of Man, and call to Mind the Years that are past, and observe how it has always been with other People: But yet it is very innocent and lawful so to do; because we know of no set Term of Days, beyond which none shall pass; that is still in the Hands of God, and because the protracting of that Life, is to us, we think, of Use, and to no one's Wrong.

The Child is dying, there, of a malignant Fever, a Train, as it were of liquid Fire, is running through its Veins, and burning up the Life, that has been the Desire of I know not how many Years past, and the Hopes of I know not how many more to come; the Parents pray to God, in earnest, you may be sure, and put their Trust in him, and hope he will extinguish this unnatural Flame; and this they do, when Remedies are ineffectual, Physicians found of no Value, and every thing about them bids them give it up for lost. The Thing they ask is lawful, the Time is not too late, the Work is not impossible in Nature, and God is the Master of all. The Event alone could declare, whether it were not fit for God to give this Life, or for the Parents to receive it. Their Confidence in God was well placed, although their Hopes and Desires were disappointed. If Reasons were to be sought for, in such Cases, out of, or beyond what natural Causes teach us, we may be sure that God denies us, with as much Reason as he gives us, what we ask. We must not therefore think our Hopes were wrong placed, and our Confidence in God ill grounded, and our Prayers in vain, because we receive not what we ask so earnestly: Because it is the Power and Goodness of God, which justifies our Hope and Trust in him, and which encourages us to pray; and this his Power is not diminished by our Disappointment, nor is his Goodness the less, in his not granting what we thought (not *He*) convenient for us. It is impossible (as I have before said) to pray to God without believing him *kind* to intend our Good, *wise* to discern what is our Good, and *powerful* to procure it. These are the very Reasons of Prayer, and the Motives of addressing to God, for what we think we want: And these are the Foundations of all our Hope and Confidence in him. And yet these are the very Reasons, why our Prayers may not be heard, and our Hopes not answered, and yet God be still as merciful and well-intentioned towards us, as when he grants our Requests. We suppose him *good*, to intend our Happiness, he may therefore be



good in with-holding from us, what *we* think is good for us, but is not. We suppose him to be *all-wise*; and therefore refer it to him to chuse for us. How do we know he does not exercise his great Discernment, in refusing to us what *we* think is good for us, but what *he* knows is not? Shall we only think *he* judges right, when he judges as *we* judge, and measure out his Wisdom by our Affections and Desires? If we believe him wise enough to choose for us, the same Reason will shew him full as wise in his refusing what we ask of him; yes, and full as *kind* too, if we would believe *that* is good for us to have, which he gives, and that not good, (all Things considered) which he with-holds from us. But the Misfortune is, that we measure good by our own Affections and Desires; that is good, we think, which we seem to want, and to set our Hearts upon, and nothing else can satisfy.

Let your Father be Seventy Years of Age, and your Child Seven, the first a wise and virtuous Man, a Life that is necessary to you, and useful to the Commonwealth, and all that are about him; the other, as the rest of Children are, hopeful enough: If some Distemper put these two Lives into equal Danger, you will do what you can for both; and you will pray for them both, and trust in God for both their Healths and Safety: But both of them dye, and Nature swallows up the Concern for the Parent, in the Grief for the Child; and because the Bias of Affection is strongest on that Side, our Hope and Confidence seem more defeated, and our Prayers, we think, less heard, in the one Case, than the other. It is plain we consider not the Usefulness of the aged Life (the Continuance of which was certainly the greater Good) in respect of the Dearness of that little Life, which yet we could not tell what it might prove. These Things shew us, a little, that we are governed more by our Affections than our Reason; and that as they make us pray more earnestly, and hope more firmly, so they make our Disappointments much more heavy, and occasion us to think our Trust and Confidence in God were *deceived*, when they were only *not answered* according to our Wishes. But wherein, then, stands the Blessedness of having God for our Help, and hoping in the Lord our God, if he will only help us in the Way of Nature, and we may only hope for what is reasonable and fit? Why, this is as much as any reasonable Man can look for, or desire. The utmost that a reasonable Creature can hope for, is to be favoured and succeeded by God in all his reasonable and honest Undertakings, by Means that are natural, and common to him with all the World. It is a great Support to the Mind of Man, to believe himself under the Protection of a Power, that is able and ready to secure him, whilst he is acting reasonably and honestly; able to continue on the Course of Nature, in its established Settlement, by which Men live in good Hope, and Expectation of Success; by which they plow and sow, and hope to reap and gather in their Harvest; by which they study, labour, venture out to Sea, and hope to gain the Fruits of each, in its due Season: Able to prevent a great many mischievous Events; able to remove all Hindrance and Impediment in the Course of Nature; able to influence People's Minds, by diverting them from enterprizing Things that would do hurt to others; and by throwing little Occasions in their Way of doing good; and able, by a thousand and ten thousand little undiscernible Means, to secure our Happiness, and prevent our Misery; to turn the Accidents that look as if they would swallow us up in Ruine, into the Means of our Security and Preservation; to dissipate those Clouds of Misfortunes that are ready to burst upon our Heads and overwhelm us, and give us Day again, with Calm, and Safety. I cannot tell how a Man can live in such a World as this, with any Joy, that does not verily believe, and much depend upon the Providence of God; and *that*, without expecting Miracles or Favours very much out of Course, but only looking for such as are consistent with his known Rules of Government. What should we do without this everlasting Source of Comforts, this powerful Refuge, under all Distresses? How many fore Calamities, publick as well as private, do we fall into, out of which



which no human Power or Wisdom can deliver us, nor shew us any Way out of? And how must this perplex a Man, unless there were a Being above, kind and able, to have Recourse to? Hope is the Food and Sustainance of the Mind, and Men will live a great while upon it, and all the while much easier, though in Misery; whereas the same Afflictions would, without that Hope, oppress them quite, and drive them to Despair and Madnes; and this must often be the Case, were not the World and Men, and their Affairs, all in the Hands of God, and in his Government, who can do every thing, beyond what we are able to ask or think. And who would part with such a sure Foundation of Trust, and Hope, and Confidence, that is not weary of his Life? Who would let go this *Rock of Ages*, for any thing else he can lay hold on, in this World? Oh may we never be forsaken by him! Yea rather, may we never first forsake him! The Life of Princes is a Mole of Sand; all the Stability of human things, is the Stability of Wind and Water, changing their Face, shifting their Places every Moment; God alone abideth for ever, God alone is worthy of our Trust, and never will deceive it. It is He alone who can extricate us out of all our Difficulties, wipe away all our Tears and Sorrows from our Hearts, deliver us from our Enemies, protract our Princes Lives, save us by Few as well as Many, give us no more Occasions of Complaint and Lamentation, and turn *even this* to our Advantage, give us the Spirit of Unity and Love of one another, of Wisdom to direct us in our publick Resolutions, and to improve under all the several Dispensations of his Providence. *Is any Rock, like our God? Who is so great a God as our God? Be thou exalted Lord in thine own Strength, so will we sing and praise thy Power.*



A

## S E R M O N

Preached at St. *Austins*, in 1701. upon the Death of  
King WILLIAM.

2 S A M. Chap. II. Ver. 7.

*Therefore now, let your Hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant ;  
For your Master Saul is dead ; and also the House of Judah have  
anointed me King over them.*

**T**H E *Philistines* having defeated *Saul's* Army, and found the Bodies of him, and his three Sons among the Slain, stripped them, and used them ignominiously, cut off their Heads, erected Trophies of their Armour, in their Idols Temple, and fastned their Bodies to the Walls of *Bethshan*. The Sense of this huge Dishonour, touched to the quick the brave and faithful Subjects of *Jabesh-Gilead*. And all the valiant ones arose, and went all Night, and took the Bodies from the Walls, and came to *Jabesh*, and burnt them there. And they took their Bones, and buried them under a Tree at *Jabesh*, and fasted seven Day. When *David* was come up to *Hebron*, after *Saul's* Death, in order to be crowned King, as God had promised him, some body told him what the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead* had done, and that it was they who had buried *Saul* : With Purpose, perhaps, of exciting him to Jealousy and some Displeasure, against those, who, at the Peril of their Lives, had done their last and greatest Honours to the Person and Memory of their dead Prince, and to his Family, who was accounted *David's* greatest Enemy, and who indeed had used him very ill : Or (if these Arts are Strangers at the Courts of new Princes) perhaps with good Design of letting *David* see, how much it was worth his while to court the Service of Men so brave and faithful to their Lord both living and dead. With whatever Mind this Intimation was given, it is plain, that *David* took it right, and as became a generous and a noble Prince. He sent Messengers to the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, and said unto them, *Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed this Kindness unto your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him : And now the Lord shew Kindness and Truth unto you ; and I also will requite you this Kindness, because ye have done this thing.* There is nothing envious, nothing suspicious, in a truly great Mind. *David*, who knew the Obligation *Saul* had laid the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead* under, could not but be pleased to find the kind and dutiful Return they had made to him. That Prince had saved them when they were reduced to the greatest Straits imaginable by the *Ammonites* ; when even their voluntary Submission to Servitude, would not be accepted, nor made the Foundation of a Covenant, unless they might thrust out all the right Eyes of the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, and lay it for a Reproach to all *Israel*. In this amazing Strait, *Saul* with an unexampled Zeal and Expedition, comes upon the *Ammonites*, destroys them quite, and  
saves



saves the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*. This great good Turn was never, certainly, forgotten; but best remembered now, in the great Extremity to which that Prince was reduced, and in which he was lost. And this it was, that pleased *David* so well, to see a People so grateful to their Prince who had saved them from Reproach, and Bondage, and great Misery, by an Action that might have been misconstrued by a Successor less generous than *David*, and at a Time when nothing but true Gratitude, and a right Sense of Honour, could have inspired them with such an Undertaking; for the King they served, was now dead. A Prince that would be well served, must needs like those who served their Prince well; and they who love Gratitude in others, know how to be grateful themselves. What could the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead* propose, but doing as became Men of great Honour, when he, for whom they exposed themselves, was past rewarding and remembring all their Service? But they remembered, loved, and honoured their *Deliverer*. One may compliment a dead Prince, when it will please the living one, with Interest and Design, and Hopes of finding his Account in it. But *David* was to be the Successor by God's Appointment; a Man that was maligned and pursued by *Saul*, to Outrage; and therefore they could look for no Encouragement from thence, for all the Kindness they should shew to *Saul*, according to all Appearance. They could not therefore design to flatter, by this their noble Enterprize. Nothing but Gratitude and Honour could excite them to it. And those are Principles that will make Men act most worthily of themselves, and say and do what should be said and done, in spite of all Discouragements, and all the poor Precautions, that Fear and Selfishness suggest. But they had to do, it seems, with a Prince of the finest Make and Temper possible, and of a Heart as truly generous, as themselves were brave and grateful to their Master. He gave their Action its right Turn, and fell to blessing it, and praising it, and promising to requite it himself, when there should be Occasion. *Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed this Kindness to your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him, i. e.* done all that Men could do, to testify the grateful Sense you had of your Deliverance by him; redeemed him from the insulting Enemies, and paid him all the Honours that you could, and saved the Nation from the Reproach of having neglected their dead Prince. *And now the Lord shew Kindness and Truth unto you.* God shall himself return these Honours on your Head, and heap his Blessings on a thankful People: He hates Ingratitude, of all ill Qualities; it is the Parent of Forgetfulness, and all Offence against himself; and he exclaims with great Earnestness against his People, for nothing more, than for *forgetting God their Saviour, and the wonderful Works that he had done for them*. Now it is the same ignoble, inconsiderate Spirit, that makes Men so soon unmindful of their heavenly and their earthly Benefactors; and therefore *David* thinks, that God is pleased with People of Gratitude and Honour, and prays him to shew Kindness and Truth to them. Nor is it below the Dignity of inspired History, to record with Blame and Blemish, the Ingratitude of *Israel* to the House of *Gideon*. It is said in the Book of *Judges*, viii. 34. *That the Children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the Hands of all their Enemies, on every Side; neither shewed they Kindness to the House of Gideon, according to all the Goodness which he had shewed unto them*. No Wonder if they who can forget God, should also forget his Instruments, by whom he works Deliverances; and when they have received the Benefits, should slight the Hand that reached them out. But this a little by the Way. *David* does not only pray to God to shew Kindness to those grateful Subjects, but assures them he himself will never forget them.—*And I*, says he, *will also requite you this Kindness, because ye have done this thing*. I, who am, by God's Appointment, to succeed your Master, will take all Care to encourage and reward such honourable Service, and will remember those, who in Regard to the Religion of their Country, and the Honour of their Prince, have done brave and becoming



Actions. This Proceeding of *David*, is indeed so reasonable and just, so wise and prudent, that it would not appear so great and generous, if we did not more regard the Passions and Affections of private Men, and the Intrigues of Court, and what is *ordinarily* done, than what is *fit* to be done. Taking therefore Mankind as we find it, *David* did not only act *wisely*, but *nobly* upon this Occasion, in commending and encouraging the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, for the Kindness they had shewed to *Saul*, the grateful Sense they had of his delivering them heretofore, their fetching off his dead Body from the insulting Victors, and taking away the Reproach of *Israel*. Who shall go out the second Time, and fight the Battles of that State, that shews it self unthankful to its first Deliverer? It is an unaccountable Proceeding, that of the *Grecian Commonwealths* of old, to banish and disgrace their *Generals*, after great and extraordinary Performances, and saving of their States from utter Ruin. The Fear of their aspiring afterwards to Government, is not a Basis for that Building. That Maxim in particular, That *they who are able to support a sinking State, are able also to confound and overthrow it*, is a pernicious one, and false, and hatched in a villainous and most ungrateful Court: For it is not always so; and where it is true, that Men are able, yet there they are not always inclined to do it; and if it sometimes happen, that both Will and Power agree together, yet it is better venturing that sometimes, than always to discourage Gallantry and Virtue. To be subject to the Insults of open Enemies, is worse than fearing a suspected Friend. Is it nothing for a Prince to venture all he has, and Life it self, for the Preservation of your Peace and Welfare? And if that Prince should have his private Aims, and might be push'd on by Ambition, Love of Glory, and Desire of Fame, or of enlarging Empire and Dominion; putting the worst (which may be all Surmise) yet still the Evils and the Dangers he delivers People from, and all the Benefits acquired by Victory, and Success, and consequential Peace, do very well deserve to be rewarded with Love, and Praise and Admiration, and whatever else is suitable for them to pay, or him to receive. There are such Charms in brave Performances and gallant Actions, that they do not only tie and bind those who are benefited and advantaged by them, but conquer Strangers, and the Unconcerned, and oft extort due Praise and Admiration from their very Enemies, and make them love the Wisdom and the Valour that sometimes subdues them. Let any one in reading Histories, though never so remote in Time, and unconcerned in Interest, see and observe, if his Heart do not unaccountably side, and go along with brave and noble Leaders; if he does not rejoice in their Success, and fall again with their Misfortunes; if he is not moved with generous Indignation, to find a Prince or People partially unkind to *brave Captains*, and most unthankfully neglecting past Deliverances: If he does not secretly wish that State and Commonwealth may come again to need, and to implore that Help they had ungratefully forgotten, or not sufficiently esteemed, and recompenced. Which shews how natural it is to love and honour the Defenders of their Country, Life, and Laws, and Liberties; and how uncomely, thankless and ungrateful Usage to them, shews in other People. But there was nothing of this in *David's* Disposition, or that of the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*: The one knew how to praise and to reward, the grateful and the honourable Acts, which the other knew how to perform. *I also will requite the Kindness you have shewn to Saul*. There is something so very good in the Character of *David*, with Respect to *Saul* his Predecessor, that it distinguishes him very much. What he here says to the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, is exceedingly handsome and becoming him; but the Concern he shewed at his End, was more disinterested yet, and the Lamentation that he made over him and *Jonathan*, is tender above all Expression, and shews how little he maligned that Prince's Honours, when he himself, in the most noble moving Manner possible, excites the People to express their just Esteem and Honour of their dead King, by all the Praises and the Sorrows they could utter. These things indeed are not in the Words  
of



of the Text, but they go before, and belong to them; and they are the Preface, to that Purpose which *David* opens in the Text. *Therefore now* (says he) *let your Hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant, for your Master Saul is dead; and also the House of Judah have anointed me King over them.* From whence it appears, that his Design was to gain the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead* to him; *Let your Hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant*; be not dismayed at your great Loss, continue still to love and serve your Country, and look to find one that will honour and reward such dutiful and faithful People. Whilst *Saul* was living, I asked not your Service; but *now your Master Saul is dead, and now the House of Judah have anointed me King over them.* These are the Reasons he uses to engage them in his Interests—Their former King was dead, and *Judah* had chosen him, or rather anointed him whom God had chosen, King. What an Encouragement is here, to good and brave People! The King himself commends and blesses them for what was past, and courts their future Service. Happy those Days, when honourable and faithful Service performed to their Country, and dead Prince, recommended Men to the Love and Favour of his Successor! When they were not considered or neglected for the *Party* they had chosen, but for the *Good* that they had done, and for the Duty they had honestly discharged! This was reasonable, this was wise; but this, because unusual, was accounted brave and noble. No Prince but stands in need of good and faithful Subjects, and, without them, stands but single: And noble and virtuous Actions do not only recommend, but make Men necessary. To side with a Party, and to serve a Turn, does but increase a Faction; but to consult and to promote the general Interest of one's Country, is the true lasting Merit, and will gain *Honour*, though it may not *Offices*; but in a virtuous Reign, it will do both. When *David* is the Prince, he banishes all little Jealousies, and poor Suspicions, looks out for Merit, and the Men of Courage, Honour, and true Virtue, and cares not though he find them in the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, who had adhered to *Saul*, with an unshaken Firmness, though *Saul* and *David* were as opposite as could be, in the People's Opinion. To them he makes particular, and condescending Application, and bids them be of good Courage, and hope to find in him, one that could well distinguish Merit, and reward it. *For now your Master Saul is dead.* This was not to reproach their Service, and Adhesion to that Prince, nor to insult them on that Loss; but to remind them, that he, to whom they owed, and to whom they had payed the greatest and most honourable Service, was now dead; if *Master* signifies here any more than *King*, it is, to be sure, to their Advantage, that *Saul* is now called their *Master*, to intimate, that their Affection and Behaviour to him, was such as was peculiar to that Relation; as if their Love and Duty had been somewhat personal, and less indefinite than that which Subjects pay their Princes, which differs much, we know, from that which Servants pay their Masters. It is as if he had said, you have discharged the Duty of Subjects, with the Love and Diligence of menial Servants, and those of the Household; but now your King and Master is dead; and as he cannot require, so he is capable of receiving, no farther Service at your Hands. You have redeemed his Fame, and rescued his dead Body, with the same Zeal and Pains with which you served him living; preserve those good and faithful Principles, and transfer the Expressions of them to him, to whom your Allegiance is now due, upon your Master's Death.—*For now also, the House of Judah have anointed me King over them.* The Tribe of *Judah* was the only Tribe that unanimously adhered to the Choice that God had made of *David*, to rule his People; no Question but a great many, of the other Tribes, did also concur with them, *i. e.* particular People among them; but no Tribe in general saw so fully into the Purpose and Appointment of God to make him King. The Fame of God's Designation, and his being anointed King by *Samuel*, the standing Prophet of the Times, and the Persecutions he underwent from *Saul*, upon this Head, must needs have made it



it notorious through all that small Country, that *David* was to succeed *Saul*, when it should please God to open the Way by Death, to that great Honour. But the Generality of the Tribes did not plainly understand this Business, but still adhered to the House of *Saul*, and thought of fixing the Crown to his Posterity; which is the Reason of *David's* thus applying himself to the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, and I suppose to other People in the like manner. And to induce them to assent, he assures them that the Tribe of *Judah*, the Chief and Royal Tribe, from whence the King *Messiah* should proceed, had already complied with God's Promise, and anointed him King over them. Whose Example, he hopes, the rest will follow, to prevent those dreadful Consequences that always follow Civil Wars, and States divided.

This is the History. And the Application of these Particulars will be very proper in some Respects; in others not at all. And *First, Our Master Saul is dead. How are the Mighty fallen! And the Weapons of War perished.* Friendship and Honour helped (I see) to compose that fine exalted Elegy; its noble Strains are mostly owing to the unexampled Love that knit the Souls of *Jonathan* and *David*, in Bonds, that even in Death were not to be divided. Whereas *our Matter* would, in Truth and Justice, sooner oppress, than fail, the Man that should attempt a Lamentation. There is indeed no great Resemblance betwixt these two Princes, nor is there any need of raising the Value of the one, at the Expence of the other. It is enough to the Purpose in Hand, to remember, that what the King of *Israel* was to *Jabesh-Gilead*, that was the dead King to all these Nations, and in Consequence to others also, namely, their great Deliverer and Defender. Must not the Terms of our Submission and our Life have been, to have been Slaves, and to have offered up our Reason, and Understanding, to the great Reproach of human Nature? And how much less is that, than having *our right Eyes thrust out*? Religion and our Liberty were the Conditions of the Covenant that was to be betwixt us; not that *we* offered them, but that nothing less would make our Peace, or serve our Adversaries Turn. And I am always glad to think those two Conditions go together, and that they who would be our *Lords*, will not accept of one without the other. From these hard Terms the King did, *at the Kingdom's Call*, deliver us: And if we have not equally esteemed this Blessing, with the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, if we have not received it with equal Gratitude, we know who it is breaks off the Parallel, and where the Dishonour lies: We shall be found unworthy of the like Protection, though, if it please God so to punish us, we may fall again into the like Hazards. Nor is it yet too late, to make Enquiries of this Nature. For though He is now no more capable, or sensible of any grateful Honours that may fall upon his Person; yet, for our own Sake, we should glorify his noble Acts, and should pursue his Memory, with all the Praise and Gratitude that it deserves; to satisfy the World abroad, how much we value our Religion and our Liberties, and how closely we will abide by them, by shewing how we valued, loved, and honoured him, living and dead, whom we esteemed the great Preserver of them both. It should not, methinks, be said, that all the World besides, should know how to prize his Life better, than we who had the Use of it. Can all the World besides, admire that Probity, that Justice, and unblemished Honour, that adorned his Life, and we alone be insensible, who reaped the Fruits of them? I challenge all our Histories, to produce a Prince, in all respects, his Equal: I call the differing Humours, Interests, and Affections and Religions of the Rulers of the World to witness, whether they ever found a Man to centre in, like him. With whom they could so unsuspiciously concert their Measures, so safely trust their Interests, and on whose Honour they depended so entirely. Could all this Confidence be built, but on the Experience of his great Discernment, his mighty Knowledge how to ballance Powers, and most disinterested Integrity, and Virtue? Where are the Bargains that he ever struck for his particular Advantage? What Selfishness has yet appeared



appeared in all his Conduct, for more than thirty Years? He might have raised his Seat upon his Native Country's Liberties; his very Enemies would have supported him, in those Pretences; but he affected no Honours but what were freely offered him, there, or elsewhere: And if the Hands that reached them, would have pulled them back, his Ambition, that was only useful, knew how to wear, as well as to deserve them. Can these, and other his great Qualities, (a few of which serve to ennoble other Princes) immortalize his Name abroad, make him the Standard of true Honour, and all Royal Virtues, and we at home think meanly of them? No Infamy, I think, could fall upon our Country, equal to this Ingratitude, and Blindness; nor more discourage brave Attempts, either abroad or at home, in our Defence, than to forget, or slight, such Virtue. I would not seem to presage things so dishonourable, and unworthy of a sensible and brave People; if all Nations did not abound with poor and impotent, with dark, malicious, and malignant Spirits, that feed upon Detraction, Calumny, and Lyes, and are set on Fire of Hell; and our own, as much as others, if not discountenanced by Men of Wisdom, Virtue, and Authority. I will end this Head, when I have wished, that neither we at home, nor our Allies abroad, may ever feel this Loss fit heavier on us, than it does at present.

*Secondly,——Since our Master Saul is dead,——*We must encourage one another as *David* did the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*.——*Let your Hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant.* These Words do literally apply themselves to Soldiers, who are Men of their Hands, but they are also proper enough, to all People, and bid them take good Heart, forget their Losses, and resume their Wisdom and their Courage, and be as useful in their several Places as they can: Do, what they did for *Saul*, to *David*; exert their utmost Powers, in the Defence of their Religion, and their Country; and more (if that may be) since more does now seem necessary. Our Loss is but too great already, and we ourselves shall make it greater much, if, with the King, we also lose our Hope and Confidence. This Blow will strike us as deep, as even our Enemies believe and wish, even to the Heart, if it do not excite us to Steadiness and Unanimity in all our Councils and Proceedings. What a Reverse of Fortune would that be! If this amazing Loss would heal our Differences, confound our Factions, and reconcile us to one another! I know of nothing that could make amends for it, but such an Issue. And such a Loss is, sure, as strong a Necessity, to bring such Union on, as any thing we can imagine; for how can we unite abroad, if we divide at home? And how can we supply that Loss, without a perfect Agreement both with our Friends and one another! But whither are we driven, to look for so fair a Day, from a Cloud that darkens almost all the Country? Well may we wish for such a Time, but who can expect his *Death* should produce such good Effects, when all the Care and Influence of his Life, could contribute but just enough to keep us quiet? Let us, however, make the best of it, and believe we cannot *quarrel* now with such Security. Let us stay till we have better Leisure to disagree, and do one another Mischief. Let us first unite against our *Common Enemy*, and when that Matter is dispatched, resume our former Differences, remembering carefully where we left off. *Lastly*, Our Hands must needs be strengthened, and we must be valiant, because *we have also anointed David King over us.* We have a Princess on the Throne, who both deserves and wants all the Duty and Affection that Subjects can pay to Her, and under whom, if we be peaceable, unanimous, and obedient, we may, by the Blessing of God, live very happily. One Female Reign, as it was long, so was it the most glorious to this Nation, that we almost ever had. And had it pleased God to have spared *another Life*, there was nothing Great and Good but what we might well have hoped for from it. Nor is our present Queen nearer allied to Her in Blood, than in sincere Religion, Virtue, Purity of Life, and all good Qualities, that can adorn a private Person, or fit her for the Throne. Let us remember



She is *all* that God hath spared us, of our native Princes, of *English* Heart, and Protestant Religion; and treat Her with that tender Duty and Fidelity, that is requisite to make a Sovereign easy, and a People happy. She will be exercised with Cares enow, it is probable, from Difficulties abroad, and therefore all good Subjects will be careful of disturbing and perplexing Her Affairs at home. It is a wrong Turn that People give to Exhortations of Obedience, Duty, and Fidelity to Princes, when they conceit they only tend to advance the Glory and Advantage of the *Governours*; it is the *Peoples* Peace, and Happiness, and Plenty and Security, that is intended most by such Discourses; and which are best provided for, and best assured, by being quiet, good, and dutiful, obedient Subjects. Is it not so, in all Relations else, as well as this? Are not those Children happiest who observe their Parents best, with most obsequious Love, and dutiful Obedience? Do not those Servants live the easiest, who live in constant Order, and under the Directions of reasonable and prudent Masters? Is not the Discharge of every Duty the Way to Praise, and Quiet, and Security? Is it not therefore every one's Advantage, to live in Order and Subjection? Must not these Duties now and then be pressed, because they have been sometimes handled indiscreetly? To flatter Princes with a Power that belongs not to them, is but to ensnare them to their Ruine, in the Experiment; and to set Subjects loose from their Obedience to the Laws, is to destroy them by their Liberty. There is no such thing as Peace or Safety to be had, but in a due Subordination of Powers, and paying each the Obedience and Submission that is lawfully required of them. We can no more be happy without Obedience to our *Governours*, than we can live without our daily Food. And we have now Occasion, more than ever, to shew our selves good Subjects. The Eyes of all the World will be fixed upon us, to observe how we behave our selves on this Occasion; our *Friends*, to see if we be worth their Friendship; our *Enemies*, to find our feeble Part, and make their Advantage of us. We must therefore shew them both, that we are much at Unity with one another, that we centre all in dutiful Obedience to our Queen, and that our Parties only now contend, who shall deserve Her favourable Regards the best, by their Affection and Fidelity to Her Person and Government, by Virtue and true Merit, and serving honestly their Country. These things will give new Life and Hopes to the one, and Rage, and Disappointment, and Despair to the other. They have long said, with *Esau*, in their Hearts, *The Days of Mourning for my Father, are at Hand, and then will I slay Jacob*. Let us shew them, that they built more Hopes on that disastrous Day, than were reasonable; that though it were a much-lamented Day, yet that it robbed us not of all our Courage and Resolution; that it gave us Grief more than enough, but did not leave us destitute, nor make us careless of our Safety: And that we will not encrease our Loss, by giving them any Advantage, by shewing any Weakness or Distraction. In a Word, we must each of us do, within our private Sphere, all that becomes true *Englishmen*, that love the Liberties and Honour of their Country, and all that becomes the Professors of the Reformed Religion, in Opposition to that great Corruption of Christianity, *Papery*; to the securing our selves at home, to the animating our Friends abroad, and to the defeating the inextinguishable Malice of our Enemies. And to the doing this, let us be sure to call in God into our Party, make him our Friend, our Patron, and Protector, to which the Way lies always open, by living in his Fear, by walking holily before him, by being honest, sober, virtuous Christians. It is not a Prophet, nor a King, but the Lord of Hosts, that is indeed, *the Chariots and the Horsemen of Israel*. It is to Him we must betake our selves, in whose Favour only there is Life, and who will be our surest Refuge in the Day of Trouble: It is He alone, who can supply those mighty Losses He of late hath multiplied upon our Heads. We placed, perhaps, too high a Confidence in Arms of Flesh. Never was Life, indeed, so made to trust in, and deceive a People, as this last, of which



which we are bereaved ! What could we not have looked for, from it ? And how much Earnest did it give us, of Security, of Victory and Success, of Peace and Happiness, and Settlement ! And how are all these Expectations vanished in a Moment ! These things must teach us to depend on Help, that never yet has failed those who would ask it, and deserve it. Let us therefore (to make an End) intreat of Him, who is the eternal Source of all true Comforts, that we may, with Truth and Reason, address to him, in the Words of the 44<sup>th</sup> Psalm, Verse 5. *Thou art our King, O God, send Help unto Jacob ; through thee will we overthrow our Enemies, and in thy Name will we tread them under that rise up against us ; for we will not trust in our Bow, it is not our Sword that shall help us : But it is thou that savest us from our Enemies ; and puttest them to Confusion that hate us : We make our Boast of God all Day long, and will praise thy Name for ever.*



## S E R M O N

On the QUEEN'S Accession to the Throne, Preached  
at St. *Austins*, in 1703.

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2 CHRON. Chap. IX. Ver. 8.

*Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in Thee to set Thee on his Throne, to be King for the Lord thy God. Because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever: therefore made he Thee King over them, to do Judgment and Justice.*

**W**HEN the Queen of *Sheba* had proved the Wisdom of *Solomon*, and seen the State and the Magnificence in which he lived, with the fine Order and Oeconomy of all his Household, *there was no more Spirit in her*, she fell, as it were, into an Ecstasy of Admiration, and blesses God, the King, his Servants, and his People, who were so happy in each other. *Blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighted in Thee, to set Thee on his Throne, to be King for the Lord thy God: Then for the People—Because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them, to do Judgment and Justice.*

In which Words we have to consider, *First*, The Goodness of God to *Solomon*, in setting him on the Throne of his Father *David*. *Secondly*, The Blessing God intended for his People, in giving them so wise and worthy a Prince as *Solomon*. *Thirdly*, The End for which God placed him on the Throne, *to do Judgment and Justice*, which was also the Means, by which the People were designed to be so happy under him.

I. *First*, Of the Goodness of God to *Solomon* in setting him upon the Throne, *Blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on his Throne, to be King for the Lord thy God.* *Solomon* was not the eldest Son of *David*, but was preferred, by the particular Favour and Appointment of God, before the rest, even before he was born; and was called, by his Command, *the Beloved of the Lord*, or one in whom the Lord delighted, and chosen to succeed his Father, and (because a Man of Peace) to build *the House of God*. His setting therefore on the Throne, (to the Disinheriton of his elder Brethren) was a peculiar Favour of God. But this Throne is also called *his Throne*, i. e. God's Throne, and he is said to be King *for the Lord his God*. The *Jews*, to the Days of *Samuel*, lived under a Theocracy, or the immediate Government of God; and the Queen might perhaps think it was so still, notwithstanding she saw they had a King: But it was not so, for, by asking a King, though never so good, God tells *Samuel*, 1 Sam. viii. 7. *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.* Yet still because the People were God's People, in Covenant with him, and favoured by him, above all the Nations of the Earth, and be-  
cause



cause he still espoused their Cause; and they still observed the Laws and Statutes which he gave them by *Moses*, the Throne is called *his Throne*, and he is said to be King for the Lord his God; as also because he was chosen by God, like *Saul* and *David* before him, to sit upon the Throne and judge his People. It was yet an Elective Kingdom with Respect to God, (as all others are) but with Respect to the People, it was, and was to be hereditary, and the eldest Son was to succeed, as *Solomon* himself declares, when he had his Mother ask of him the Kingdom for *Adonijah*, for he was his elder Brother: So that the Favour of God was still the more signal in his Preference. These are then the Reasons why the Throne of *Israel* is called *the Lord's Throne*, and why *Solomon* is said to be *King for the Lord his God*. And if ever any one might more properly be called *God's Vicegerent*, than another, it was *Solomon*: He was to reign over God's People, in God's Stead. Who can doubt, after this, but that he was to be the best King that ever reigned? That he was to govern himself by the Rule of God's Word? And his People according to the Laws that God had given them, in all Particulars where those Laws were plain; and in all others where they were doubtful, with the greatest Reason, and with his Eye perpetually upon their truest Interest and Happiness? When a Man has said, that a King is *God's Vicegerent*, he has said, in Effect, what God himself said, by the Mouth of *David*, in his last dying Words, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue—The God of Israel said—The Rock of Israel spake to me—*What was it, in the Name of Wonder, after all this Preparation? This—*He that ruleth over Men, must be just, ruling in the Fear of God*. A Speech most worthy of the King of *Israel*! Most worthy of the King of Kings, even God himself! This it is to be God's Vicegerent; to be King for the Lord his God.

It is a pitiful and shameful thing, that Men, either in Ignorance, or Flattery, wherever they meet with such noble Expressions of the Kingly Office, as, *That his Power is of God*, and, *The Ordinance of God*, and that *He is in God's Stead*, and *His Vicegerent*, and the like—should either give it a wrong Turn, by giving the Prince, from thence, a lawless and unbounded Power, because that God's is so; or only enforce from thence, the Obedience and Subjection of the People, without Reserve: Never concerning themselves with shewing the indispensable Obligation which all those noble Expressions lay upon Princes, *to be just, and to rule in the Fear of God*, and, in all things, to represent that great Original from whence they derive. *They have their Power from God*, no doubt of it; it is therefore only the Power of doing Good, for God himself has no other Power: They cannot then exceed their Principal; he can give them no other Power than what he is invested with himself: They can therefore have no Power from him, to do Injustice, Violence, Oppression, or any Manner of Mischief. *They are in God's Stead*, i. e. to do as God would have them do; as God himself would do, were he a King on Earth; and is not that the best in the World for Mankind? Say but *The Lord is King*—and every one will answer—*The Earth may be glad thereof, yea the Multitude of the Isles may be glad thereof*. For though *Clouds and Darknefs are round about him, yet Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Seat*. We cannot always discern the Reason of his Dispensations, nor the Rules of his Providence and Government of the World; but knowing he is God, we know assuredly that he is always just and righteous. And a Prince cannot be *in God's Stead*, unless he be also just and righteous. He cannot be *his Vicegerent*, but by representing him in those Perfections (according to his confined Abilities and Powers) with which he rules the World.

This is the truest Use of deriving Power from God, and of asserting Government to be the Ordinance of God. And this is the Honour, Privilege, and Advantage of



Princes, that they are in God's Stead, his Substitutes, and Vicegerents, to distribute Justice to Mankind, to keep their Nations in Peace and Order, to encourage and protect the virtuous and good People, to secure them from the Malice and Violence of wicked and ungovernable ones, and to punish such as stand out against these Ends of Government, that are so useful and so necessary to the Being of Society, and the Welfare of Mankind. This is their Glory, and their Happiness, that they are God's peculiar Instruments, by whom he showers down upon the World all the Benefits of good Government, Security from Violence abroad, and Injustice at home, and all the Advantages of Peace, and Plenty, and Enjoyments of the Fruits of their honest Labours, and of the Blessing of God upon their Diligence. They have the mighty Pleasure of having continual Opportunities of doing Good, which is a great Blessing, and a signal Favour of God. And to make the Discharge of this great Trust, committed to them by God, more certain and assured, they are cloathed with the greatest Honours that People can pay them; they live in the greatest Affluence that Nature can provide, and Art improve; they have whatever Satisfaction can be had in the World; and all their People seem disposed to give it them, and set themselves to do whatever may be pleasing in their Sight. If there be any Happiness to be had in receiving or conferring Honours, in using or bestowing Riches, in making and rewarding Friendships; if any Pleasure in Meat, or Drink, or Ornament; in being singular, distinguished, and supream; if any thing external can make Princes happy, their high Condition and Estate procures it them. So that they have great Reason to esteem themselves favoured of God, that are so charged with the Blessings of this World, above other People. All these Blessings are the natural Results and Consequences of the Power and Super-eminence of their Station: But they are also to be considered as so many Encouragements to the discharging their great Trust, and so much Recompence for doing it. They are to do the greatest Good to their People, and their People are to return them, in Lieu of it, all the Honour, Pleasure, and Advantage that they possibly can. There is therefore Reason enough, you see, for Kings to give God Thanks for setting them on the Throne; not only for selecting them, to be the happy Instruments of all the Good that he intends the World by Government, but also for all the natural Recompences of Honour, Pleasure, Riches, and Advantages, that attend their Dignity. The Queen of *Sheba* spoke with good Propriety and Reason, when she said—*Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on his Throne, to be King for the Lord thy God.*

II. Let us see, in the *second Place*, to the Blessing that God intended to *his People*, by giving them so wise and worthy a Prince as *Solomon* then was. *Because thy God loved Israel to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them.* Because God loved *Solomon*, he made him King over his chosen People; and because God loved *Israel*, he made *Solomon* their King: The King must therefore be happy in his People, and the People must be happy in their King, or otherwise the Love of God, and the Blessing he intended to both of them, will be defeated. We must not judge of God's Love to either King or People, by the *Event*, but by the Purpose and Design of God in this Relation. They were intended to be, and they might be, happy in each other; and whenever they are not so, there is a Fault on one Side. How will *Solomon* know, that the Lord delighted in him, when he set him on his Throne, but by finding it an easy Seat? By seeing his People pay him that Honour and Obedience, that is proper to make a King happy? And proper also to make themselves happy? And how will *Israel* know that their God loved them, to establish them for ever, in making *Solomon* their King, unless they find themselves happy and easy under his Government? The Purpose indeed of God is good, that they should, each of them, be happy; but that Purpose will never take Effect, unless each of them believe



believe it is their Duty, to contribute in their proper Place, to make the other happy, and make it their Business so to do. And whether each be happy or no, each will judge for themselves, by what they find and feel. The Prince will, certainly, judge whether he is happy, in all the Instances of Honour and Obedience due from the People; and the People will feel whether they are happy in all the Effects and Fruits of a wise and righteous Administration. Can any thing be plainer than this, that *Salomon* will judge, whether God be to be blessed, for making him King over *Israel*, unless that *Israel* honour and obey him as they ought to do, and he find himself happy in them? And that *Israel* will judge, whether God loved them indeed, in making *Salomon* their King, unless they find their King pursue their true Interest and Happiness? It is a vain thing to tell either Prince or People, that they are happy in each other, if they themselves do not find that they are truly so. And after all the fine Discourses that may be made on either Side, there is nothing certain but this, that a Prince can never be happy in his People, without their Submission and Obedience to the KNOWN LAWS, nor a People happy in their Prince, unless he govern by those KNOWN LAWS. Shew us a Prince in all the World, that is happy (as a Prince) where the Subjects are seditious, or at Liberty to break or despise the known Laws: Or shew us a People happy, where the Prince is arbitrary and bound to nothing, but governs by his Will and Pleasure.

I do not pretend to determine, that the People who are born in those unhappy Places, where the Princes are most arbitrary, are not equally obliged to obey their Princes, with those who are born under the gentlest and most moderate Governments, to obey their Princes; but am inclined to think they must, till they can innocently mend their hard Condition. But every one can see *they are not happy*: They enjoy not the true Blessing of Government: They are not happy in their Prince, however happy their Prince may be in them: They are not the People the Queen here speaks of; That is not the Government that God intended to be such a Blessing; for that was, apparently, to bless them *both*, and bless them in each other. The King was to bless God for being King of such a People; and the People were to bless God for having such a King: This they could never do, unless they were happy in each other; the People must therefore be happy as well as the Prince, if they must bless God for him. In all good Governments those Matters go together: And when a King and People are considered in their publick Capacities, and with Relation to one another, it is very hard to think how one should be happy, without the other.

I confess that most of the Kingdoms of the World make a sad shift to divide these Interests: And provided the *Princes* be happy, all is well, and little or no Regard is had to the People. It is enough for them, it seems, if *their Princes* be rich and powerful, able to take their Neighbours Towns and Countries; and able to hinder other Princes from taking *theirs*; able to do a great deal of Mischief to other Princes Subjects, at the Expence of the Lives and Estates of their own; and able to protect their own People, from the Violence of their Neighbours: And—~~one~~ can go no farther—~~for~~ they will not be able to protect them from their own Arbitrary Violence, Oppressions, and Exactions. It is Happiness enough they think, that they defend their Prey from other Lions, to devour it at their own Leisure themselves. This is, for ought I see, all the Happiness that most other Nations of the World enjoy: They are happy in having *Princes* rich and powerful, full of Honour and Magnificence, Empires of large Extent, Castles and Forts impregnable, Armies innumerable, and Garrisons in every City. But if this be the Happiness of a People, it is, surely, such as is not to be envied: The Happiness of a People, must appear in the People, and be felt by the People. And it is not from the Splendor and Profusion of a Court,

nor



nor Glitterings of the Camp, nor the fine Habits of a numerous Guard, nor stately Edifices of a few great Men, and their luxurious Way of living : It is not from these, that Strangers ought to form a Judgment of the People's Happiness (for all these things may be so much at the People's Expence, that they may be in Truth the more unhappy, for these so fine Appearances of Happiness) but from their *Ease*, their *Plenty*, and their *Liberty* : Then it is right ; there is the happy Country, where both the Prince and People too are happy : Not in the airy and fantastick Notions of a Prince's *Glory* and *Renown* ; but in his wise and righteous Government ; his seasonable dispensing Justice and Mercy, his Care, Affection, and Encouragement of all his People. These are the Ways of establishing a People for ever ; and these are the Ways of establishing the Throne also : And where they are both established, there is the Government that God intends to be a Blessing to a Nation. So that whether we treat of a Prince's being happy in his People, or of a People being happy in their Prince, the Means of making them so, is, in the *Third Place*, the doing Judgment and Justice ; which is also the End of God's placing *Solomon* on the Throne.

III. *Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on his Throne, to be King for the Lord thy God ! To what End ?—to do Judgment and Justice.* God delights in no Man's Person, Quality, or Condition ; but He delights in those who sustain their Character and Condition properly, *i. e.* who discharge wisely and well the Duties of the several Relations in which they stand engaged to one another, a good Servant, and a good Master, a good Father, and a good Son, a good Subject, and a good Prince : And if he delighted to set *Solomon* on the Throne, it was in Order to his sitting there most usefully : His Sceptre is a Sceptre of Righteousness, and if he put it into any Prince's Hands, it is to be still a Sceptre of Righteousness, and when it ceases to be so, how is it God's Sceptre ? And so is his Throne, *Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Seat.* He will therefore place no one in his Throne, but whom he intends and commands to do Judgment and Justice. These Words are therefore to be added and supplied to that Part of the Text that refers to King *Solomon*, as surely in Reason, and Sense, and God's Purpose, as they are found in that which relates to the People—*Because that God loved Israel to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them, to do Judgment and Justice.* God loved *Israel*, and would establish them for ever ; the Means he pitched upon, were, making *Solomon* their King. How would that do it ? By his doing Judgment and Justice. That was the Way God took to establish his People, by giving them a Prince that would do Judgment and Justice.

Do what you can with this great *Eastern Complement*, turn it which Way you will, and nothing will be clear but this—That Judgment and Justice are the Things, in which both Prince and People are to be happy. The Prince in the great Honour, Pleasure, and Rewards, that naturally as well as by God's Blessing, accompany the doing so much good to Mankind : And the People, in the Security and great Advantages they reap from a Righteous Administration of Justice. And, indeed, whoever says that Government is of God, and that the Powers are ordained of God, must say that both the Governors and governed, are intended to be blessed thereby, for God intends nothing but Good to Mankind. Natural Reason says so, by the Mouth of this great Princess : And God himself says so (as we have seen) by the Mouth of King *David.* *He that ruleth over Men, must be just, ruling in the Fear of God.* He must not only see Justice done betwixt Man and Man, and hinder one Subject from injuring and oppressing another (for this the greatest Tyrants in the World do, for their own sake, and to keep themselves upon their Thrones) but he is also obliged to be himself just, and not to injure and oppress his People ; he must rule in the Fear of God ;



God; that can never be, unless he be himself afraid of doing Injustice. That is the Difference betwixt an *Arbitrary Prince*, and one that governs by *Known Laws*: They both of them intend to secure their Subjects from the Violence and Wrongs of one another; and their publick Courts of Justice are equally beneficial to their People: But the Arbitrary Prince does what he pleases with his Subjects Lives, Estates, and Liberties; whereas the Prince who governs by Known Laws, knows he can no more injure his Subject, than he can suffer one Subject to injure another. He rules in Justice and the Fear of God, and is therefore restrained himself from doing Evil. And unless the doing Judgment and Justice, oblige the Prince himself, the People can, at best, be but half-secure, and half-happy; secure from one another, but not from Him who is the ablest to injure and oppress them; which, I say again, does not answer the End of God's appointing Government: His Ordinance is perfect, and therefore secures from all Injustice whatsoever.

I do not here meddle with what human Restraints, Princes of different Countries may be laid under, from doing Violence, and great Injustices, or who shall take Account of that; I am only concerned to say, that, according to the Rules of Reason, and God's Word, the Princes of the Earth are as much restrained themselves from doing Injustice, as they are bound to see it done betwixt Man and Man: And that, without it, what *David* said would signify little, and the Queen of *Sheba's* Compliment, be very imperfect; for, the making *Solomon* King could not be a Token of God's loving *Israel*, if the King were not obliged to do Judgment and Justice to them.

The New Testament says the same thing with the Old: And the 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, is the Place where Princes are to learn the End of their Institution, and the Reason of their Authority, as well as the People to learn the Duty of Submission, and the Reason and Use of their Obedience. *The Powers that be, are ordained of God*, then no Body doubts it is for good Ends. *Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, i. e. they are not intended to be so, by God's Ordinance*; the Virtuous and the Innocent have therefore nothing to fear from Rulers. *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? do that which is Good, and thou shalt have Praise of the same; for he is the Minister of God to thee for Good. But if thou doest that which is Evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the Sword in vain; for he is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doeth Evil.* The short of which is, that the Magistrate is God's Minister to punish wicked People, and to encourage and protect the Innocent, the Virtuous, and Obedient Subject. This is the End of Government, this is of God, and all of it good; and every Body sees how useful an Ordinance it is, having no other Aim, no Eye to any thing besides the Welfare of the Subject; which is also the very Reason of the Submission and Obedience of the Subject. It is altogether for their Profit. There can be no such thing as Judgment and Justice administred, without the Obedience of the People. If the lawful Magistrate, in the Execution of Laws, may be disobeyed, then is Government at an End, and all the Uses of it lost, which unavoidably turns to the Destruction of the People. For, *Governors* (as *St. Peter* says) *are sent by God*, and therefore are to be submitted to, because they are sent by Him, *for the Punishment of Evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well*; and therefore without Subjection and Obedience, the Wicked would escape Punishment, and the Good would be discouraged, which would destroy the End of Government.

There is not, indeed, a Word in all the Scriptures, relating to Government, but what agrees with the Compliment which the Queen of *Sheba* here makes to *Solomon*; that the Favour God designs to a Prince, when he sets him on the Throne, is, th



giving him the Abilities and Opportunities of doing the greatest Good to Mankind, by doing Justice and Judgment, which naturally rewards him here, with Praise and everlasting Benedictions, with Honour, and Pre-eminence, with Power, and Wealth, and all the Advantages this World can give, as well as intitles him, through God's Goodness, to an immortal Crown, and everlasting Happiness hereafter : And that the Favour God designs to a People, by giving them a good King, is only seen in the Effects of a wise and righteous Government. This is what the *Queen of the South* came to observe, and what she thought she saw, in *Solomon's* Government, and for which she breaks out into Admiration and great Praise, and says in the Text, *Blessed be the Lord thy God*, blessed by thee for this thy People, and blessed by this People, for giving thee to be their King. There must therefore be Reasons on both Sides, to give to God this Blessing. And because this was the greatest Compliment the *Queen of Sheba* could pay to *Solomon*, for all the Honour, Satisfaction, and Royal Entertainment, she received at his Hands, and after all the Observations she had made of his great Wealth, and Splendor, the Wisdom of his Government, and the most beautiful and orderly Oeconomy of his Household.—Because of this, I believed it would be very proper to the Occasion of our coming here together on *this Day*, which is to celebrate the *Inauguration of the Queen*, and to give God Thanks, for setting Her upon the Throne of Her Ancestors.

*Blessed therefore be the Lord Her God, who delighted in Her*, for serving him, from her earliest Infancy, with a most reasonable and unaffected Piety, and with most exemplary Virtue, and set Her on His Throne, to rule for the Lord Her God ! His Throne more properly, I hope, than any Throne, this Day, in all the World, not only for his *Christ's Religion* here professed, and here established on the right and ancient Bottom (ancient as Christianity it self first settled by the Apostles) but also for that happy Temperament of Government, by which the People live as easy as their Prince ; which does as certainly please God, as he is certainly displeased with Tyranny, Vexation, and Oppression of a People : And on this Throne may She long rule for the Lord Her God, long to promote his Glory, and the true Religion.

No Prince seems more disposed to remember in whose Stead She reigns, and whose Authority She hath ; attending wholly to his Service, and the Benefit of those who are committed to Her Charge : Affecting no suspicious Power, nor using her acknowledged one, to any Purposes but the doing Judgment and Justice. So that if by our Submission and Obedience, which make a Throne a secure Seat, and by our Zeal and dutiful Affection, which make it an easy one, we make these first Words fit proper in her Mouth, and give her Cause to bless the Lord her God, for placing her on such a Throne, to govern such a People ; we have all the Reason in the World to hope, and promise our selves, that what follows will be also true, and proper for us, who are her People, to say, *Because our God loved us, to establish us for ever, therefore made he her our Queen over us, to do Judgment and Justice.*

The *Queen of Sheba* meant no Disrespect to *David* and his Reign, when she paid this Compliment to *Solomon* and his. *David* was a brave Prince, and valiantly fought the Lord's Battles, and gained immortal Honours to himself and to the Nation : But *David* died like other Men, and was gathered to his Fathers : And God still loved *Israel*, and raised them up another Prince, that should reign in his Stead, and do, as he had done, *Judgment and Justice* : This was continuing on his Mercy to his People. And without the like Goodness shewed to this Nation, *this Day* would have furnished us with other Affections than those of Joy and Gratitude ; for, on this Day, we lost the King ! whose Life, before his Death, made Way to that Accession to the Throne,



Throne, from whence we have already reaped many Blessings and Advantages, and from whence we hope, and promise our selves, a thousand more.

The Custom of observing, with Solemnity, the *Inauguration* of our Princes, is of old, and was first discontinued (as I think) by that wicked Civil War, that confounded all Observances of Decency and Order both in Church and State, which made it hazardous to give God Thanks (some Years before he died) for placing *King Charles the First* upon the Throne; by setting up a Lower House of Tyrants, who did truly oppress the People, and overthrow their just Liberties, more than any two Kings had done since *the Conquest*; and were never outdone by any but themselves, when Part of them became a Court of Justice, and put their King to Death. The *Inauguration-Day* was usually the Day, on which the Predecessor died; but the Thirtieth of *January*, having been noted with such an execrable Mark, could not have been observed with any decent Joy, by any honest Subject. Such different Images would have crowded in upon the Mind, as must have occasioned a Confusion horrible and chocquing—to have given God Thanks for setting the Son upon the Throne, the Hour his Father's Blood was shed by Villains! Therefore his *Birth-Day* was appointed for the Festival, that we might give God Thanks for the restoring our ancient Government both in Church and State, without the Remembrance of that *Day of Scandal*.

The next Reign set the Inauguration right; but that, I think, was all. It was a Day of great Sorrow, and little Comfort: It gave us certain Fears, and very uncertain Hopes: We had many things to ask of God upon that Day, but it could not be a Day of much Thanksgiving. His peaceable and quiet Entry, and his becoming Resolutions and Professions at the first, surprized us indeed, into some faint Hopes, and short-lived Joys; but in a little Time, that Day became more truly *Festival*, by being the *Birth-Day* of our present *Queen*, than for the Honour it was marked with by his Succession to the Throne.

The following Reign was honoured by no such solemn Observation; as well because there had been no *Decease*, as for the great Unsettlement and Hurry, all Things, and all People were then in; not that there was not as much Reason to injoin it, and as ready a Disposition to observe it, as at any other Time. For, that Reign will be as memorable, and welcome to Posterity, as any we have had, without such Mark to note it by: And heretofore when People asked why such a Statue was *not crowned*, it was thought a greater Honour, than the asking why such a Statue *was*. Let but a Reign be memorable, for true and solid Benefits designed and done to a Nation, and it will eat out all the Teeth of Malice, and live in Praise, in Spite of all the Opposition of the World. *This Day* put an End to that *great Life*, which all the World of Friends and Enemies knew how to value, except a few poor *English Wretches*. And it had been a Day of lasting Sorrow to all true Lovers of their Country and Religion, had not the Lord delighted in the *Queen*, to set Her on his Throne; had he not loved our Land, to establish us for ever, by setting Her over us, to do Judgment and Justice. Her Qualities are truly such, and such Her Disposition to Piety and Virtue, that we, without a Subtlety, Distinction, or a secret Sense, can heartily give God Thanks for setting her upon the Throne. We cannot only *pray* to him, for such good Gifts and Graces as he sees are needful to the Discharge of Her great Trust, but we can *praise* him, for what we see already in Her, and make this Day, a Day of true Thanksgiving. The *State* has tasted largely of Her Bounty already, and the *Church* is (1703,) going to do the like also, by a most generous Christian Act of Goodness. So that if God shall give Her Rest, and make Her Reign a Reign of Peace, She will, with *Solomon*, build up the House of the Lord Her God, which  
David



*David*, though he had it in his Heart, could never do, for the Wars that were every where round about him. So that if we be as well disposed, our selves, by peaceable and dutiful Obedience to Her, by Union and Agreement with each other, as She by doing Judgment and Justice, we may, by the Blessing of God, become a very happy People; and have great Cause to praise Him for, and to rejoyce in each the other; and to pray Him, that this Day may often return, with Honour on Her Head: And, that after a long and happy Reign, in wise and righteous Administration, She may receive a glorious Recompence at the Lord's Hands, and be crowned with everlasting Happiness in Heaven.

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T H E  
 L I F E and M I R A C L E S  
 O F  
 St. *W E N E F R E D E*,  
 T O G E T H E R W I T H H E R L I T A N I E S.  
 W I T H S O M E  
 H I S T O R I C A L O B S E R V A T I O N S made thereon.

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*To the* R E A D E R.

**B**OLLANDUS the *Jesuit*, in the third Chapter of his General Preface to the *Acta Sanctorum Januarii*, printed at *Antwerp* 1643, lays down several Rules concerning the Credibility of History in general; but (as his Work led him) with a more particular Regard to the Credit of such as had written the *Lives and Miracles of Saints and Martyrs*. These Rules I offer to the Reader, and believe he will think them as reasonable as I have done, to be determined by, in passing his Judgment on the History of St. *Wenefrede*; and they will be, I know, the less exceptionable to such as I would win, because they come from one of *that Order*.

“ The *First* Degree of Credit (he says) is due to such as wrote the Lives of Men “ they knew, and saw, and lived withal. Thus *Possidius* wrote the Life of St. *Austin*;” and thus, say I, St. *Athanasius* wrote the Life of St. *Anthony* of *Egypt*; and thus *Sulpicius Severus* wrote the Life of St. *Martin*.

“ The *Second* Degree of Credit is due to such Authors, as wrote, not what they “ saw themselves, but what they received from such as were Eye-witnesses. Thus “ *Bonaventure* wrote the Life of St. *Francis*, St. *Hierom* of *Hilarion*, and a nameless “ Author the Life of St. *Clarus*.

“ The *Third* Degree of Credit is due to such as wrote, not what they had seen “ themselves, nor what they had heard from such as were Eye-witnesses, but what “ those People told them, who said they had it from such as were Eye-witnesses.” This is what we call the Credit of the *third Hand*; and thus Pope *Gregory* wrote his *Dialogues*, and in them the Life of St. *Bennet*; and thus St. *Hierom* wrote the Life of *Paul* the Hermit.

“ The *Fourth* Degree of Credit is due to such Authors as transcribe what they re- “ late, from Writers that stand in any of the above-mentioned Degrees of Credit; or “ that make Collections from undoubted Monuments of Donations, Testaments, “ Transactions, or Commentaries, that are within the three first Rules of Credit.” But this, with the good Father’s Leave, need not have been made a distinct Rule, because it is indeed no Rule of itself, but the Observation of the three others; that is, he who transcribes from any Author of Credit, shall, if he do it faithfully, be as much believed, as that Author is himself from whom he transcribes.



“ And all the Writers of these Classes (saith the *Jesuit*) are to be believed, if they  
 “ are wise and honest Men, and if their Writings are pure and genuine, and not at all  
 “ adulterated; for, the Credit of naughty Folks, and such as are over-credulous, is  
 “ to be much suspected.” These Conditions and Restrictions, of being *wise*, and  
*honest*, and *not over-credulous*, do, in my Opinion, render the foregoing Rules very  
 little useful or significant; and yet, to do him Justice, his Conditions and Restrictions  
 are altogether as reasonable, as are his Rules: And whoever shall be at the Pains to  
 read the tenth Part of what *Bollandus* had read of the Saints Lives, tho’ written by  
 Men within the three Rules, will find Reason (if he have the Courage) to own, that  
 all those Rules, without those Restrictions, are good for nothing; and that the Writers  
 within those Rules have left us such Relations and Accounts of Lives and Miracles  
 of Saints, as can no more be believed by serious *Papists*, than what they know to be  
 altogether Fiction and Invention can. The Writer of the Life of *Wenefrede* was one  
 who came neither within the Rules, nor the Restrictions: He lived not (as I shew  
 hereafter at large) within 500 Years of her Death, nor cites any Author that did so;  
 and I dare say he was not *wise*, and I am sure he was *over-credulous*; and he who  
 will write in these Circumstances, cannot be very *honest*, I mean in the Quality of an  
 Historian.

“ But there are (as he goes on) some Saints Lives, that were not written at all, (he  
 “ means by Writers of the three Classes) or are lost; but their Names and their Mi-  
 “ racles were remembred, and their Lives were written upon common Fame and  
 “ Tradition. Here *Judicio opus est*, here is need of Judgment and Discernment:  
 “ If what is said agrees with what is delivered by other creditable approved Historians,  
 “ ’tis well, and we must be content; we could wish those lost Lives were extant and  
 “ entire; but ---- Sometimes (he says) their Miracles only are preserved; but then  
 “ they are so exaggerated, and so many new Things added to them, that some Peo-  
 “ ple do really look upon them but as so many *old Wives Fables*.

But that which follows is much more remarkable and worth observing: “ We often  
 “ meet with Miracles (saith he) which tho’ we cannot deny but they might *possibly*  
 “ be wrought, yet there is such a *Cause* assign’d for them, and they are done in such  
 “ a *Way and Manner*, that one may well doubt whether it became the Majesty of the  
 “ everlasting God so to supply Mens Wants, or yield to their Requests, and hear  
 “ their Prayers. But because (so great is his Goodness) we cannot fully comprehend  
 “ what good things he hath prepared in Heaven for those pure Souls that are beloved  
 “ of him, or how far he will please to gratify them on Earth, we should not hastily  
 “ condemn such Relations as seem exceedingly strange and paradoxical to us, but ra-  
 “ ther receive them with Reverence, as they are said to flow from the Fountain of Di-  
 “ vine Goodness, from whence our whole Happiness is to be derived and fetch’d. Let  
 “ it be granted, that the things said to be done, were not indeed done: What then?  
 “ greater things than they might possibly be done, and were done at other Times, and  
 “ in other Places. Take heed therefore of denying that such things were done, because  
 “ you think they neither could, nor should have been done.” Poor Father! His Reason  
 and good Sense constrained him to lay down very good Rules, and to strengthen them  
 with just Conditions and Restrictions; but the Books that lay before him were, every  
 one of them, Exceptions to those Rules, or would admit of none of those Conditions and  
 Restrictions. He saw himself at the Head, as it were, of twenty or thirty huge *Folios*,  
 (so many he might well imagine they would make, by what himself had prepared)  
 that would every one of them contain a hundred and a thousand things, senseless, ri-  
 diculous, incredible, unworthy of God, and those good Saints; and what should he  
 do, but fall to softening those Conditions, and abating of the Rigour of his Rules,  
 and desiring his Reader’s Favour, to take things as he found them, with all their Faults?

But



But as my Business is not to quarrel with *Bollandus*, (to whose Works I am obliged for several things) so I will only observe of him, that all the Advantage his Rules and Conditions give me, in the Case of *Wenefrede*, his Softenings, Relaxations, and Abatements, would deprive me of; and if I will be *persuaded* by him, I must believe her whole *Legend*; but if I follow *his Reason*, as well as my own, I must not believe a Word of it. But we have not done with this good Father yet; what follows concerns us somewhat nearer, and it is in the 34th Page of his Preface.

“ And because that God, in working Wonders, does usually accommodate himself to the Simplicity and Faith of Men, therefore (observe) the Lives of the *Irish* Saints, the *Scotish*, and the *British*, as well those of *Albion* as of *Armorica* (*i. e.* of *Bretany* in *France*) are (*planè portentose*) downright monstrous, and made up of Miracles almost incredible; either because the Constancy of Faith was remarkably eminent among those People, or the Simplicity and Candour of their Lives exceeding rare and wonderful, or certainly because their Writers were more simple than those of other Nations (*aut certè quia scriptores simplices*.)

Here is a very sly and smart Reflection on all the Subjects of the Crown of *England*; for, let him soften it as he will, he means to call us a foolish and a credulous People. I wonder how a *Jesuit* came to say so, of either the Writers or Believers of our Saints Lives; but, indeed, what he says is generally true. No People have ever swallowed down such senseless Legends, as our own senseless Writers have furnish'd us withal. I cannot choose but hope that the *Papists* among us will take notice of this Remark, that their Credulity is really contemptible, even among such People as are of the same Religion, and such as make their Advantage of it. It is not a Protestant Writer, but *Bollandus* a *Jesuit*, that says (in the Life of *Gildas*, Jan. 29.) “ That, in the Lives of the *British* Saints, there are abundance of things that he could make nothing of, that could be brought under no Chronology, and were above all Belief.” 'Tis *Godefride Henschenius*, another *Jesuit*, the Partner and Continuer of his Labours, who (in *Menſe Maio*, in his Preface to the Life of *St. Kellac*) says, “ That as to the Story of the two Harts, or Hinds, which came uncall'd for, to carry the Saint's Body to Burial, and stopped of their own accord when they were come to the Place; and afterwards served the Inhabitants for plowing and other Husbandry-work, like tame Cattle, and came every Night when they were unyok'd, to the Place where the holy Body lay, and licked the Sepulchre with great Devotion---- That as to this Story (he says) he does not know whether he should receive it, or condemn it quite, because there are a world of things full as improbable as this, and more, that fill the Acts of the *Irish* Saints, which he thinks were written more to set People a staring and admiring, than to gain Belief.” It is no Protestant, but *Father Mabillon*, a *Benedictine Monk*, whose Learning, Honesty, and good Qualities we hold in great Esteem; 'tis he, who (in his Preface to the *Acta SS. Ord. Benedict.* Vol. I. 1668. put out at *Paris*) says, “ There are some who have the Vice of feigning or believing any thing, born as it were and bred with them, and which they derive (he thinks) from the very Nature of the Soil: And many there are who lay this to the Charge of the *Armorique* and the *English* Writers of Saints Lives; and to this Purpose he quotes a Passage out of *Petrus Cellensis* (one that lived about 1180.) to *Nicholas* an *English Monk*, where he tells him the Island was encompassed with Waters, and the Inhabitants partook of the Qualities of that instable Element; and were turn'd about with every Wind and Fancy, and were so fond of their idle Dreams, that they compared them to Visions, nay, and prefer'd them.” I cannot choose (I say) but hope, that the *Papists* of our Islands will consider these Accounts and Characters, that learned Foreigners, Priests, and Jesuits give of our Countrymen, who have written the Lives of our Saints; and will hereafter abate something of their Fondness



Fondness and Credulity, and give such Authors no more Credit than they deserve, or than they would give them, had they written any other Histories, and Accounts of Things or Persons, and not the Lives and Miracles of Saints.

After this short Digression, I return to *Bollandus's* Preface, who thinking, I believe, that his Reflection would bear a little hard upon our *British* Writers, and our *British* Saints, tries, in the next Words, to make us some amends; "Neither (says he) can any one (tho' never so ill inclin'd) deny that many Miracles have been wrought among those People, (*i. e.* the *Irish*, *Scotish*, *English*, *Welsh*, and *Britons of Armorica*) since even at this Day (his Book came out in 1643.) the Places which were heretofore devoted to the Honour of the Saints, are famous yet for many Miracles wrought at them; altho' the Worship of the Saints has long been banished and put down among those Hereticks. There is great Concourse still to *St. Wenefrede* the Virgin's Well, in the extreme Parts of *North-Wales*, of such as seek a Cure for their Diseases and Distempers. And a Man of great Quality (*Vir Illustris*, and every Gentleman is *Vir Illustris* abroad) assured me he hath seen even Hereticks themselves resorting to that Well, to seek for Help; and when he asked them, why they, who were of the new Religion, which forbid the Invocation of Saints, as of Souls that either slept till the Resurrection, or that, if they were in Heaven, knew nothing of our Affairs below, why they should fall into the Dotages of the *Papists*, (as they were daily taught by their Ministers, the Preachers of the *fifth Gospel*, to call them) and come to *St. Wenefrede's Well* for Help? They made him this Answer, That they neither cared, nor minded, what their Ministers prated in the Pulpit; they very well remembred that the Waters of that Well were used to do Good both to themselves, and to their Cattle, and to the Cattle of their Fathers, and that they used to impute this Benefit either to *St. Wenefrede*, or to God the Author of all Good." The Answer of these Hereticks to this Person of Quality is so remarkable, that I must not trust my Translation of it to the Reader, without giving him the Words in Latin: *Respondisse eos, Quid in Pulpitis illi ganniant, sibi curæ non esse; meminisse illius Fontis aquam sibi, suisque gregibus, ac Parentum suorum, esse salutarem consuevisse; idque vel Divæ Wenefredæ, vel Deo boni omnis Auctori, acceptum scribi.*

The Reader will, by this Time, perceive, that I did not concern myself with this *Jesuit* at meer Adventure, and only because he was a *Jesuit*, and put out the *Acta Sanctorum*; but because he meddled much with our *British* Saints, and reproaches us very hardly, and makes especial Mention of the *Saint*, whose Story I am searching into: And I desire that, before I leave him, I may make some few Observations on his last Relation, which I think is *Jesuitical* all over. And *First*, there is no need of denying that many Miracles have been wrought in *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, *Wales*, and *Bretagne* in *France*. No doubt but God hath wrought Wonders amongst us, as well as in other Places; and hath made some of our holy Men and Women Instruments of doing great Things, as well as other People. We are no Enemies to Miracles, but we desire to be assured that they were wrought, before we believe them. *Secondly*, We have no need to deny that Miracles were wrought in such a Place, where such a Saint was heretofore honoured, even since the Reformation. Let any one prove that such a Miracle has been wrought by God at *Holy-well*, and there is no reasonable Man will deny it to have been wrought at *Holy-well*. What would these People have? But would it follow presently, that if a Miracle were wrought at *Holy-well*, it must needs be wrought by *St. Wenefrede*, or by God for her Sake, and at her Intercession? God, for his Mercy's Sake, and through the Intercession of his blessed Son, may hear the Prayers of such as call upon him faithfully at *Holy-well*, and may work Wonders in the Favour of such Supplicants; and yet the Saint  
of



of *Holy-well* may have no Share in that good Issue. I do not, for my own part, believe, that any Miracles have been wrought at *Holy-well*, either before or since the *Reformation*, because I see none proved: But if there had, it would not have followed, that St. *Wenefrede* had had any Hand therein. This is a Fallacy that easy credulous Souls do often suffer to be put upon them; who if they happen to pray for Relief in the Church of such or such a Saint, and it pleases God to give them what they ask, do immediately impute to the Merits and Intercession of that Saint, the obtaining their Request. This false Conclusion has been the Rise, the Progress, and Continuance of abundance of Superstition. *Thirdly*, That there is still a great Concourse of People from all Quarters to *Wenefrede's Well*, does only prove that there are still a great many crafty Priests, who find their Account in sending a great many weak deluded People on such Errands: It does not prove that they obtain the Remedies they come to seek, nor the Cures they stand in need of. *Fourthly*, 'Tis true that many of those, whom the *Jesuit* and his Person of Quality call *Hereticks*, do also resort to *this Well*, to seek Help. 'Tis a very cold Spring, and is good, as other cold Springs are, in many Cases; but the *Hereticks* seek for Help from God, and no body else; and if they find it, by the Means of those Waters, they return God Thanks, and no body else, and bless his holy Name for having given such salutary Virtue to that Well; and I dare say, that in proportion to the Number of those that use those Waters, as many *Protestants* as *Papists* receive Benefit from them. The *Papists* come to St. *Wenefrede's* Well for Help, and so do the *Protestants*; the *Papists* expect some Help from *Wenefrede*, the *Protestants* none; if the *Papists* receive any Help, they impute it to the Merits and Intercession of St. *Wenefrede*, and are thankful to God and her; if the *Protestants* find any Benefit there, they thank God, and mind not *Wenefrede*, but impute it to God's Blessing and the cold Waters. This had been the right Representation of the Man of Quality to the *Jesuit*; but this had signified nothing to the Honour of St. *Wenefrede*, which the Man of Quality did certainly intend, and the *Jesuit* makes the Story seemingly end so, but indeed if you consider it well, it ends just as it should when told by a *Jesuit*, i. e. *equivocally*; which made me say the Relation was *Jesuitical* all over, and most of all at the Conclusion. The Man of Quality charges the *Protestants*, with believing that the Souls of the Saints sleep till the Resurrection: This is a false Charge; a Pope indeed hath been condemned and deposed for holding this, among many other false Opinions, but the *Protestants* hold none such. The Man of Quality charges the *Protestants*, with not calling upon the Saints, because they know nothing of our Affairs below. If the Saints knew nothing of our Affairs below, the *Papists*, I believe, would no more invoke them, than the *Protestants*. But this is not what the *Protestants* say, that I know of, in Justification of their not praying to Saints; but they say, that they do not know, nor have any Means of knowing, whether the Saints above know any thing of our Affairs below. A Man would not pray to God himself, unless he was sure that God could hear his Prayers, and knew his Wants, and was able to relieve him, if he saw fit. Now the very Reasons that induce a *Protestant* to pray to God, must hinder him from praying to Saints and Angels: He does not know that Saints and Angels understand his Wants; he does not know that they can hear his Prayers, if he should make them; nor does he know that they can help him, in his Necessities, although they heard his Prayers. In a word, he knows nothing of Souls departed in the Favour of God, but that they are happy. When it is made very plain that the Saints above know our Affairs below; when it is made very plain that they can hear the Prayers of such as call upon them from all Parts of her Majesty's Dominions at one and the same time; and when it is made plain that they can not only hear, but grant our Requests, of what kind soever: When these things are made plain, the *Protestants* will not, I



think, be backward to call upon the Saints. All these Powers are manifest in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; upon them we are bid to call, and upon them we call with all Assurance of being heard. God is in every Place, and therefore all the Ends of the Earth may pray to him at once; God knoweth every thing, and therefore knows what every one stands in need of; and God is able to do what he pleases, and therefore able to grant us every thing we ask, if he sees fit. Let but the Saints be proved to be Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent, and they will then, and not till then, deserve to be the Object of Prayer: And since we have a God thus qualified to pray to, what Need have we to seek for any other? But the Hereticks, it seems, do come to *Wenefrede's Well*, let their Preachers prate as long as they please against it; and know that both they and their Cattle, and the Cattle of their Fathers, have received Benefit from those Waters. What then? so they do still. These *Rusticks* were, I think, too much for the Man of Quality, and having pleased him with giving a hard Word to their Ministers, made him believe they had a great Veneration for his Saint, by saying that they and their Fathers, and both their Cattle, had found great Benefit from those Waters; which might be said by those who knew and believed nothing of *Wenefrede's* Story: For observe the Cheat, they tell him, that this was constantly ascribed either to St. *Wenefrede*, or to God. I cannot but think that *Bollandus* laughed to himself when he heard and told this Story; for is there a Protestant in the World who will not own freely, that whatever Benefits any Persons or any Cattle have received by the Waters at *Holy-well*, they received them either from God, OR from St. *Wenefrede*? This is the Way of cheating Children; Children in Understanding as well as in Years. Had they said, that the World was created either by God, OR by St. *Wenefrede*, they had said what was exactly true; but it had been too ludicrous a Way of speaking, when that Supreme, Eternal, and Almighty Being is concerned. And thus I take my Leave of this good Father, desiring my Reader to turn to those Rules of his, and to apply them, when he finds it convenient, to the Legend of St. *Wenefrede*; and to give it such Credit as, according to them, it shall deserve.

It remains now that I give some Account of the following Work. I will not be troublesome to the Reader in telling him what my Relation to *Holy-well* is, and how I came to be engaged in the Design of discrediting the Story of St. *Wenefrede* in particular: It is enough that I am a Protestant, a Member of the Church of *England*, and have a Zeal for the Purity of God's Service, and a sincere Desire of undeceiving the Papists in this erroneous and very hazardous Point of *Saint-Worship*. And as *Wenefrede* is held for a Saint of great Reputation among them, and great Resort is had to *Holy-well* by *Pilgrims* (as they call them) from all the different Quarters of the Kingdom, and even from *Ireland* too, to pay their Devotions to her in the Place where she is said to have suffered Martyrdom; so I believed it would be of Use to take her History into particular Consideration. To this Purpose I set myself the hard Task of procuring and reading whatever had been written concerning her by any Author, either in Print or Manuscript, antient, or modern, that I could get: And if I were not very sure I had a good Design in doing it, I should be a little ashamed of having spent so much of my Time in reading so much Trash: But so it is, that I am able (I doubt) to say, That I have seen more of Her than most Men now living have done; and have moreover looked into almost all our *Historians* to find NOTHING said concerning her. The first Account I fell upon was the Life of *Wenefrede*, written by an anonymous Author, in the *Cotton-Library*, *Claudius* A. 5. which I have therefore called the *Cotton-Life*. This was certainly written after the *Norman Times*, because the *Normans* are mentioned therein under the Name of *Francorum*, which was the Word then, and some time after, used, to distinguish the *French* from the  
English



*English* Subjects; but it was not long after, for the Character and Writing seem to be of that Age; and by the Plainness of Style, and Simplicity of Narration, I judge it to have been written between the Years 1100 and 1200, by some good *Welshman*, who knew nothing of her Translation to *Shrewsbury*, but leaves her buried at *Guitberin*, and tells of no Miracles done there, or elsewhere, but at *Holy-well*, which yet he never mentions by that or any other particular Name.

The next Life I read was written by *Robertus Salopiensis*, of great Length, and is to be found in the *Bodley-Library* at *Oxford* amongst Abp. *Laud's* MSS. L. 21. fol. 140. This Work is dedicated by one *Robert* the Prior of *Shrewsbury* to one *Guarine* the Prior of *Worcester*; and at the End of his Work he says, the Bones of *Wenefrede* were translated to *Shrewsbury* in or about the Second Year of King *Stephen*, which was about 1137 or 1138; and between the Years 1130 and 1140 there was one *Guarine* Prior of *Worcester*; and 'tis certain from *Ordericus Vitalis*, that about the same Time one *Herebertus* (mentioned by *Robert*) was Abbot of *Shrewsbury*, and succeeded *Godfredus*. But altho' the Time and the Name agree very well, yet I am not without some Scruples that neither the Life of *Wenefrede* is quite so old as 1140, nor her Translation so early as 1138; nor am I quite satisfied that *Robert*, who wrote the Life, was the same Man who wrote the Account of her Translation, though they are now joined together: But as I build nothing upon these Suspicions, so I will content myself with setting down, in its proper Place, a Reason or two why I believe her Translation was not so early, without drawing any Consequence from thence to the Prejudice of *Robert's* History, which I allow to be of its pretended Age, viz. about 1140.

The next was a short Life of *Wenefrede*, written by a nameless Author, consisting of Five Chapters, mostly taken out of the *Cotton-Life*, a little out of *Robert*, and the rest added by the Author himself. The Book in which it is, belonged heretofore to *Ramsay-Abby*, came afterwards into Sir *James Ware's* Library, and a Copy from thence was procured by the late Mr. *H. Dodwell* for the Use of Dr. *Humphreys*, late Bishop of *Hereford*, who had designed to have given a full Account of the Rise and Progress of this fabulous Story; and who by his great Skill in the Antiquities and History of *North-Wales*, which was his native Country, was very able to have done it. What diverted him from his Purpose I know not, but he seems (by what remains of his) only to have gathered his Materials together in order to it, and just to have begun.

The next in Order of Time, was the Abbreviation of *Robert* of *Salop's* Life by *John* of *Tinmouth*, about the Year 1366, in his Book called *Sanctilogium*, as Archbishop *Usher* tells us; and this is the Life of *Wenefrede* which is found in *John Capgrave* at this Day, the greatest Part of whose Legend is but a Transcript of *Tinmouth's* Work, put into Alphabetical Order for the Use and Convenience of the Reader: But the Expilator's Name being so much better known than the Man's from whom he copied, I all along call it *J. Capgrave's* Life of *Wenefrede*.

But the Piece that should be, methinks, of the greatest Authority, is the Account of her Life in the *Nine Lessons* in the *BREVIARY secundum usum Sarum*, which were read in the Church upon the 3d of *November* (which was appointed to be the Saint's-Day) in the same manner that the *Epistles* and *Gospels* are now read among us. And tho' these Lessons were read in *Latin*, yet they were also put into *English*, and very well known among the common People, who held them in great Esteem, and believed them without Scruple, because they were commanded to be *used and read in Churches*, though in another Tongue for Order and Uniformity's sake throughout the Catholick Church.

This *Capgrave's* Life of *Wenefrede* was abbreviated, and a little altered by *Laurence Surius*, a *Carthusian*, and put into his Work in its proper Month and Day, and from him



him abbreviated yet farther by a *German Monk*, whose Name I have not now by me, though I have read it. 'Tis also *Capgrave's* Life that *M. Alford* the *Jesuit* hath transcribed into his *Annals* in the Year 660, and which *Cressy* translated. Her Life is also to be found in *old English Rhime* of about 300 or 400 Years standing, in the publick Library at *Oxon*, *super Art.* A. 72. fol. 189, as also in Prose in the *English Legend*. But in the Year 1635 it pleased one *J. F.* a *Jesuit* to translate into *English* the Life of our Saint from the *Latin* of *Robertus Salopiensis*, and to add a *Preface* and a *Conclusion* of his own; and as this is the most authentick Account of her, so it is what went most about in Popish Families: And upon this Book's growing scarce, an unknown Person thought fit this last Year, in 1712, to give us a *Reimpreſſion* (as he calls it) of *J. F.*'s admirable Life of *St. Wenefrede*, with an additional Account of some more modern Miracles wrought by that Saint. Upon Sight of this last little Book, I laid aside the Design I had form'd of putting out the *Cotton-Life* of *St. Wenefrede* in *English*, with a large Chapter of Historical Notes added to it, together with a Chapter of *the Superſtition of Waters*, and another of *the Growth of Miracles*: This Design, I say, I have for a little while laid aside, and thought it better for the present to give the Reader this *New Life*, with such *Observations* upon it, as I thought would be most for his Service, whether Protestant or Papist. But as I have in several Places referred him to those Chapters, I assure him they are in such a Readiness, that he shall not, if there be Occasion, long be without them. I have, for the Popish Reader's sake, left out nothing of the *Editor's* Book.

This is a small Account of the following Work, for which, as the Times go, I expect neither Praise nor Approbation; but shall be well content if I do any true Service to either Protestant or Popish Reader thereby. The *Editor* says in *pag.* 175. "That in the Travelling Season the Town of *Holy-well* appears populous, crowded  
"with zealous Pilgrims from all Parts of *Britain*. The *Well* itself receives a Succession of Visitants from Sun-rise till late at Night.

This, I hope, will justify the present Undertaking, and shew it is not altogether unreasonable for a Protestant to be a little zealous for his Religion also, when Superstition has so many Votaries. I did not indeed think, a few Years ago, that one should have wanted an Apology for speaking or writing against Popery, in any Branch of it. I looked upon it as a constant Enemy, a standing Force always in Readiness to fall upon us, and sworn, in a manner, to our Destruction; and therefore that we were, as good Protestants, obliged to be upon our Guard continually, and to annoy them all we could. But there has been since that so marvellous a Silence, and so profound a Security in that Respect, that to betray any Fears of its returning now, is not only a Mark, it seems, of a weak Understanding, and little Insight into publick Matters, but also (if you will believe some Men) of ill Design and Disaffection to the Government. But I confess I cannot carry my Respect so far to any Governors, as to believe we are secure, because some People tell us so, against the Alarms our Senses daily give us to the contrary. I cannot chuse but think that this *Security* itself is one of our worst Symptoms. Whether the *Wolves* bargain with the *Dogs* to hold their Tongues, or whether they bark not, out of Fear, or Laziness, or Complaisance, the Flock, I think, is not a Jot the safer. The Enemy we have to deal with, grows more numerous, is active, vigilant, and daring, daily pushes on his Conquests, is in good Heart and under no Discouragement but that of *Laws*, rejoices in our Unconcernedness, confirms us in our Indolence, and tells us, if we suspect them, we are unreasonable. And for these Reasons I should be glad to see Men somewhat more afraid of their inveterate Enemy, talk somewhat louder against *Popery* both from the Pulpit and the Press, and tell the People, That if that Superstition ever settles here again upon the Throne, there is an End of their Religion, Liberty, and Property, and every thing besides, that Life is worth the living for.

T H E



T H E

## Editor's Preface to the *Devout Pilgrims*.

**T**IS to you, of what Degree and Condition soever, that I dedicate these  
“ few Sheets. You, in Equity, claim a Right to them above the rest of  
“ *Great Britain*; because with painful, yet chearful Steps, you measure  
“ Journeys from the remotest Part of our Island, to the miraculous Head  
“ of the *Holy Spring*; where you mix with the rapid Current warm Tears of per-  
“ fect Contrition; and shivering in the Stream, you look up to that Omnipotent  
“ Power which raised St. *Wenefride* to such eminent Sanctity and Glory.

### O B S E R V A T I O N S.

**T**H E Author of the following *Observations* does also dedicate them, in great earnest, to these same  
*devout Pilgrims*; and prays them to believe, that as he seriously intended them for their especial  
Use and Service, so he does truly mean and wish well to them. He also thinks they have a better  
Claim to them, because they make such painful Journeys to this *Well*, from the remotest Quarters of the  
*Island*. It is to save these painful Journeys, to such sincere and well-designing People, that he hath under-  
taken this little Work. He would not, by any means, abate or cool the Fervors of their Devotion, but  
he would have them spent in a much better Manner, and fixt upon a nobler Object, that both requires  
and deserves them all, and in due time will recompence them all. He is no Enemy to Tears, or any other  
Tokens of true Contrition; but he believes they are shed in a very wrong Place, when shed at *Holy-well*,  
in Contemplation of St. *Wenefrede*'s Sufferings, Sanctity and Glory; because he thinks there are no suf-  
ficient Proofs, that she ever suffered, that she was a Saint on Earth, or is now glorified in Heaven. These  
are the Reasons why he would not have the *Pilgrims* take such Pains to pay undue Honours to *one*, who,  
for any thing they know, is *an imaginary Saint*, and of whose very Being there can be no Proofs brought,  
that will satisfy a reasonable Man, in any other Point of History; much less in the Case of *Pilgrimage*,  
where the Business is to thank God for his Gifts and Graces bestowed upon the Saint; or to pray to that  
Saint for something that we want; or to pray to God to hear us for that Saint's sake; or to that Saint to  
intercede with God for us. In all which Cases a Pilgrim ought to have the fullest Assurance, and the  
greatest Certainty that is possibly to be had, 1<sup>st</sup>, That *Wenefrede* did once live, as surely as he himself now  
lives; 2<sup>dly</sup>, That she was a Saint upon Earth, as surely as he is a Sinner; 3<sup>dly</sup>, That she had her Head  
struck off at *Holy-well*, and miraculously set on again, as surely as he is now at *Holy-well* himself, and has  
his Head upon his Shoulders; 4<sup>thly</sup>, That she is now glorified in Heaven, as surely as he is now praying on  
Earth. I would desire the *Pilgrims* to this *Holy Spring*, to consider with themselves, whether they can or  
ought to want any of these Points of Certainty, of the Life, and Death, and Sanctity, and Glorifica-  
tion of St. *Wenefrede*, in case they are required to thank God for her, or to pray to her; and then, to give  
me the Patience of reading the following Observations, in which I have endeavoured to shew, that they  
neither have, nor can have, that Certainty and Assurance of her Life and Death, and Sanctity, which  
ought to be the Bottom of Praise to God for her, or Prayer to her herself. This is the Purpose of the  
following Observations; and which I could not avoid repeating often.

“ I have seen tender Virgins, who would look pale, and tremble at a Northern  
“ Blast, sinking themselves under Water, offering their Vows and Prayers with as  
“ great Alacrity, as if they had been partaking of the most transporting Joys upon  
“ Earth. The interior Fire of Divine Love got the upper hand of the cold Ele-  
“ ment, and flaming Petitions mounted up to bring down expected Blessings.

This is very high indeed. Devotion has its Transports certainly; but every body will not easily be-  
lieve that they are either raised, or cherished much by plunging into very cold Waters. St. *Bennet*  
rolled himself, all naked, in a Bed of Briars and Nettles, for another Purpose; and St. *Francis* made to  
himself a *Mistress* of a large *Snow-Ball*: But I believe they were rather voluntary Penances, than any  
great Helps to Devotion at that Time, how useful soever they might afterwards prove. And I doubt that  
these adventurous Virgins must be content to hear the Standers-by pass much the same Judgment upon  
their Undertakings, if they will not be content to own they come, as others do, for Health and for Re-  
freshment. I do, in great earnest, wish these Waters had more salutary Virtues in them, than I think  
they have; 'tis for the Country's Good, and for the Good of every one: But I would not have these good  
Effects, whatever they are, assigned to so wrong a Cause, as they are by poor deluded *Pilgrims*, or rather  
by those who ought to teach them better.

“ No Complaint was heard except this pious one, that they knew little of the  
“ Merits of the Saint; only that this was the Place of her *Martyrdom*, and that it



" was famed for miraculous Cures, both of Soul and Body. This valuable Confidence engaged me to undertake what I here offer unto you, not to gratify Curiosity, but to promote Piety and Devotion.

Pilgrims are usually reasonable enough in these Cases, and complain of little more than of the Hardships of their Journeys. The Men that send them on these Errands, and the Men that live upon the Place to which they are sent, have generally a good Understanding betwixt them, and take care to keep up the Credit of each other; and above all, to magnify the Saint, whose Shrine they are to visit. The Pilgrims to St. *Wenefrede's Well* were exceedingly satisfied, it seems, that she was a great Saint, and that *Holy-well* was the Place where she suffered Martyrdom, and famous for many wonderful Cures wrought both on People's Souls and Bodies; but they wanted, belike, to know the Particulars of her Life and Death a little better; and this Author undertakes, in the following Book, to give them Satisfaction. I have already said a little, and shall hereafter have Occasion to say much more, to convince both him and his *Pilgrims*, that neither can He give, nor They have, the Satisfaction wanted in this Matter. I will only add in this Place, that I believe no one can produce any Author, either written or printed, who mentions any *Parish, Church, or Well*, to have been in the Place where *Holy-well* now stands, beyond the Year 1130. In *Doomsday-Book*, which was made between the Years 1084 and 1086, there is no such Name to be found, tho' *Gronant, Prestattyn, Diffard, Gulgrave, Moston, Whitford, Caerwis, Halken, Skeiviog*, and other adjacent Towns, (that now lie in *Flintshire*, but were then reckoned in *Cheeshire*) are to be found, with little Variation of the Names. This is indeed a negative Argument, and in itself not very concluding, because the not naming a Place, is not a Proof that no such Place was then: But to such as know the Nature and Intent of making that Book, which was to be a *Survey*, as it were, and *Terrier* of the whole Kingdom, by which the Kings were to know their Strength, and rate their Wealth in Taxes; to such, I say, the Silence of *Doomsday-Book* will be a kind of Proof, that *Holy-well* was not then a *Parish* or Place of Note. The British Name of it is *Treffynnon*, in English *Well-town*; but the oldest Date of that, that I can find, is not, I guess, much above 400 Years. The Word *Holy-well* is evidently *Saxon*, and the first Time it appears to me, is in the *Charter* of Confirmation made to *God, St. Mary, and the Monks of Basingwerk*, in *Flintshire*, by King *Henry III*, tho' it has hitherto been thought to be *Henry II*; but since the King there gives the Lands which once belonged to *W. Peverell* in the Time of King *Henry* his Grandfather, and it is certain that *Henry II* took away those Lands from *W. Peverell*, because he was found to have poisoned *Randle* the second Earl of *Chester*, in or about the Year 1154, therefore 'tis plain that *Henry* here named must have been *Henry III*, whose Grandfather *Henry II* was. It was this *Randle* Earl of *Chester* that is said to have founded *Basingwerk*, in the Year 1131; so the *Monasticon*, Vol. I. p. 720; but *John Brompton* in his *Chronicon*, and *Henry Knighton*, tell us it was *Henry II*, that founded the Monastery of *Basingwerk*, after the Year 1150, tho' they do not agree in the Year. The Way to reconcile these things, is to say, that King *Henry II* was the Founder, but *Ranulf* Earl of *Chester* the great Benefactor, who gave them *Holy-well, Fulbrooke*, and other Places; not so early as 1131, nor yet so late as 1154, but some time between those Years. There is also mention made of *Holy-well* in the *Charter* of Confirmation made to the same Monastery, by *Leweline* Prince of *Wales* and *David* his Son, 1240. But let the *Well* be as old as it will, the Silence of *Giraldus Cambrensis*, who went the Visitation Circuit with *Baldwine* Archbishop of *Canterbury* in 1188, is one of the shrewdest Signs in the World, that the *Well* was then in no Credit at all; for tho' he says they lay all Night at *Basingwerk*, which is not above half a Mile from *Holy-well*, and to which, as you have seen above, *Holy-well* belonged, yet he says not one Word of either the Place, or the *Well*, or the Saint, or of any Cures or Miracles wrought at that Place by her; and yet there is hardly a Page in all that *Itinerarium Cambriae*, but has some one or more ridiculous and superstitious Stories in it: Which is a sort of Demonstration to such as know the Manner of that Writer, that it was not for want of believing or remembling, but of hearing and knowing any thing remarkable of *Wenefrede*, or *Holy-well*, that he had made no Mention of them. There is also at the End of *Nennius*, in the *Cotton-Library*, *Vitell. A. 13.* a Page or two, with the Title ----- *De Mirabilibus Walliae*, in which there is Mention made of other Springs and Waters in *Wales*, famous for something or other, but not a Word of *Holy-well*. The Reader, I hope, will be content that I endeavour now and then to gratify his Curiosity, in such Remarks as these, since the Editor's Views and mine are very different.

" The Life of St. *Wenefride* was first written by St. *Elerius*, who is frequently mentioned in it.

There is no other Proof in the World that ever there was any such Man in Being as *Elerius*, but his being mentioned in the Life of *Wenefrede* written by *Robertus Salopiensis*; and in this Life there is not one Word said of his having written any thing about her. *J. Leland* in C. 49. *De Scriptorib. Brit.* gives this Account of him: "*Elerius* was heretofore, and still is, in great Esteem amongst the *Welsh*. I take him to have studied first at St. *Asaph*, upon the Banks of the River *Elwy*, and afterwards to avoid the Noise and Frequency of the People, to have retired, as it were, into the Desert. This is most manifest, that he erected a Monastery somewhere about the *Vale of Clwyd*, in which there was a great Number both of Men and Women, amongst whom was *Wenefrede*, a noble Virgin bred up by *Beuno*, and whose Head was afterwards cut off by *Caradoc*, her furious Lover.

Most of this is taken out of the Life of *Wenefrede*, written by *Robert*, and has no more Authority than that can give it: But here is no Mention of any Life written by *Elerius*, which yet had been much to *Robert's* Purpose, and would have given him great Credit, if he could have said that Part of the Account of *Wenefrede* was written by *Elerius*, one that lived at the same Time with her, and was her Spiritual Father and Instructor. This was an Advantage that *Robert* could not have overlooked, but he knew



knew nothing of it: And that is an unanswerable Proof that *Elerius* did not write the Life of *Wenefrede*. That he studied (if ever there was such a Man) upon the Banks of *Elwy*, is said by *Leland*, perhaps upon as good Ground as if he had said the Banks of *Jordan*; and I dare say the one may be as well proved as the other can. I do not hereby mean that *Leland* invented this Story, but that he transcribed it out of some Manuscript he met with in his Searches, and set it down (as his Way was) out of his Author, without believing it any more than I do. That *St. Asaph* should be a Place of great Resort, and a kind of *University*, where, amongst other Inhabitants, there dwelt 965 Monks, 300 of which looked after the Cattle and the Plough, and 300 more were busied in the Offices of the Monastery, and in providing Diet and other Necessaries for the rest; and the remaining 365 were Students and Priests, and employed in the Service of God; that these People should live in the Town of *St. Asaph* is very amply attested in the Legend of *St. Kentigern*, written by *Joceline* a Monk, and much about the same time with *Robert*, and of full as good Authority; but it would be very strange if *Leland*, or any one who knew the Country and Place, should believe it. One thing more I think fitting to observe about *Elerius's* writing the Life of *St. Wenefrede*, and that is, That *Dr. Thomas James*, formerly Library-Keeper at *Oxford*, and a very learned Man, finding the Life of *Wenefrede* in the *Cotton-Library*, written by a nameless Author, noted in the Margin these Words ---- *Per Elerium Britannum Monachum, Anno 660*. I doubt not but he was led into this Mistake by the ordinary Tradition; for had he read the Life itself, he would have found it written by one who lived after *William the Conqueror's* Time, which is 400 Years after the pretended *Elerius's* Time. There is also another Note added to *Dr. James's* by another Hand, thus ---- *Vel potius per Robertum Salopiensem, Anno 1140. ut Vir quidam eruditus melius docet*. But this is also a Mistake, for the Life in the *Cotton-Library* contradicts *Robert* in some Places, and is not one sixth Part so long, as they who will compare them may see. Who this *Vir eruditus* was I know not, but the Person who says this of him, was the late learned *Dr. Thomas Smith* in his Account of the *Cotton-Library*; but neither the one nor the other had seen the Life written by *Robert*.

“ From him (*i. e.* from *Elerius*) *Robertus Salopienfis* collects and supplies, especially what related to the Translation of her Holy Body, he being the chief Agent in bringing the same to his Monastery. This *Robert*, the worthy Prior of *Shrewsbury* (who afterwards, for his great Talents, was chosen *Abbot*) wrote the *Saint's Life* soon after the Translation of that Treasure, which was in the Year of our Lord God 1138.

It is indeed said in *Robert's* Account, that the Translation of these Bones was made in the Second Year of King *Stephen*, which falls in 1137-8. But to this I have two or three Objections. First, That the Life of *Wenefrede* in the *Cotton-Library* (which was plainly written after the *Norman Kings*, as appears by *Diebus quinetiam Francorum: And, In tempore quoque Francorum: And, Pacis jure ubique per Patriam violato, Francis atque Gualensibus se ad invicem oppugnantibus*; and more of the like kind, which evidently refer to the Times of the *Norman Princes*, of whom King *Stephen* was the last :) From this Life, I say, it appears, that the Body of *St. Wenefrede* was even then at *Guitherin*, the Place where she lived, and died, and was buried. *Locus quidem, quo cum virginibus conversata, Guitherin vocatur; quo etiam post vitæ dormitionem, cum consodalibus virginibus, VIII Kalendas Julii, sepulta requiescit in Christo*. Wholwer will read this Life of *Wenefrede*, will find it was written by a *Welchman*; and since it was written after the Times of the *Norman Kings*, and no Mention made of the Removal of her Body or Bones to *Shrewsbury*, but taken for granted that she still lay buried at *Guitherin*, it is not very likely that the Translation was so early as 1138, which was the Second Year of King *Stephen*; at least the Writer of this Life had heard of no such thing, who, I say, in all Likelihood wrote after the Days of *Henry I*, if not after those of *Stephen*; because it is not reconcileable with either Custom or common Sense for a Writer to say, *In the Days of the Normans*; or, *In the Norman Times*; or, *In the Times when the Normans and the Welch were at Wars*, unless he wrote at least a little after those Times.

Another Objection to this early Translation of *Wenefrede's* Bones to *Shrewsbury* is this: That *Ordericus Vitalis* says nothing of this Matter, who was as likely as any Man else to do it, if he had heard of it, because of his near Relation and Affection to this Monastery at *Shrewsbury*. The Account he gives of himself is, That he was born in the Year 1074, the XIV Kal. March, and baptized at *Attingesham*, not far from *Shrewsbury*, a Town upon the *Severn*, by one *Ordericus*, a Priest, who gave him his own Name and was his Godfather: At Five Years old he was sent to School at *Shrewsbury* to one *Sigward*, a Priest, who taught in the Church of *St. Peter and Paul*, which Church belonged to *Odelirius*, his Father, and stood by the River *Mola*: Here he stayed till he was Ten Years old, and was thence removed to *Utica* in *Normandy*, where at Eleven he received the first Tonsure, and was called *Vitalis*, because it happened on that Saint's Day; at Sixteen he was made Sub-Deacon, at Eighteen Deacon, at Thirty-three Priest, and so continued 34 Years, when he made an End of his History, which was in the Year 1141. *Odelirius*, his Father, was a great Friend of *Roger de Montgomery*, who was Earl of *Shrewsbury*; and it was at his Exhortation, and by his Assistance, that *Roger* built and endowed this Monastery in 1083, and fetched his Monks from *Sais* in *Normandy* to fill it. In this Monastery *Odelirius* lived and died a Monk himself in 1101, and so did a Son of his, and Brother to *Ordericus*. These are the Reasons why *Ordericus* is so very particular in his Description and Account of this Monastery above any other Writer we have; it was his native Country, he went to School in the very Church, that was afterwards turned into a Monastery of *Benedictines*; his Father and Brother were Monks in it, and doubtless many of his Relations lived about and near the Place. It is to him (and, for any thing I have yet seen, to him alone) that we owe the Knowledge of this Foundation, and of the first Abbots of it, and of other private Occurrences relating to this Place. It is he who in the Year 1138 (the very Year of the pretended Translation of *Wenefrede's*



*Wenefrede's Bones*) tells us, that *William Fitzalan, Municeps & Vicecomes Scrobesburiae*, who married *Robert* the Earl of *Gloucester's* Daughter, rebelled against King *Stephen*, and held *Shrewsbury* against him for a whole Month; but that at last the King took it in *August*: And yet this *Ordericus*, as zealous a Monk as *Robert*, but a better Historian, says not one Word of *Wenefrede's* Translation, though he has Occasion to mention the Transactions of the *very Year* in which it was done, in the *very Town* where it was done; nay, he continues his History three Years or four lower, and yet says nothing of it. This makes me suspect *Robert's* Credit a little in his Story of the Translation: For although Silence is not a sure Foundation to build an Argument upon, either for or against a Fact, yet I assure the Reader, that the Silence of a Monk in the Case of a Saint's Translation to a Monastery much favoured by him, is clear another thing than the Silence of other Historians in other Cases.

In the MS. Life of Sir *J. Ware*, the Translation is said to have been in *Tempore Regis Henrici*; and if he means *Henry II*, I should sooner incline to believe it; but it is not worth the while to give Reasons for either Opinion. *Robert* is not an Historian whom one would be at any Pains to discredit, if good People were not moved by his Authority to go on Pilgrimage to a Saint of his making.

“ His Sincerity is much commended by Card. *Baronius*, *Surius*, *Pits*, and  
“ *Posssevinus*.

I assure the Reader that none of these People say one Word or Syllable of the Sincerity of Prior *Robert*; not one of them ever saw his Book. Whatever *Pits* says is transcribed from *Leland* or *Bale*, with a little Change of Words, and generally for the worse. *Surius* gives us a short Life of *Wenefrede*, but it is but an Abbreviation of *Capgrave*. *Posssevinus* says, He was a Briton, a Monk, and wrote the Life of *Wenefrede*, and lived about 1140. Card. *Baronius* says nothing at all of him; but in his Notes on the *Roman Martyrology*, on Nov. 3, tells us, That he had heard great Matters of *Wenefrede's Well*, and the Miracles done there, from *Thomas Goldwell*, the Bishop of *St. Asaph* himself, who was an Eye-witness, and worthy of all Credit; but not a Word of *Robert*. I wish the Popish Readers would learn a little to distrust the Relations and Histories which their Priests put into their Hands, and be now and then at the Pains to examine whether the Facts and Accounts they give of Matters be so as they represent them or no. The new Editor of this Life of *St. Wenefrede* in 1712, does but transcribe this Passage from the Publisher of her Life in 1635, but he does not do it honestly neither; for the Passage there is, That *Robert* was, for his great Sincerity, by Card. *Baronius*, *Surius*, *CAPGRAVE*, *Pits*, *Posssevinus*, and others, worthily commended. *Capgrave*, it seems, was not thought a Name of so great Credit as the rest, and therefore in this *New Edition* is left out; but, after all, he was the only Man of all the Company that ever saw the Life of *Wenefrede* written by *Robert*; and it is from his Abbreviation of her Life, that all the rest of the Writers speak: Even *Alford* himself, and *Cressy* his Translator, knew nothing of *Robert*, but what they found in *Capgrave*, though both of them wrote after the Jesuit *J. F.* published her Life in *English* from a Copy of *Robert* of *Shrewsbury* in 1635.

“ It was penned by him in *Latin*, and dedicated by him to *Guarinus* Prior of  
“ *Worcester*, both being of the Holy Order of glorious *Benedict*. He tells *Guarinus*,  
“ That what he presents him with, is from the antient and undoubted Monuments and  
“ Records of such Monasteries and Churches as the Virgin is known to have lived in; as  
“ also from the Depositions of venerable Priests, worthy of all Credit for their Reli-  
“ gious Profession, Sanctity of Life, and great Learning.

The Life of *Wenefrede* written by *Robert* Prior of *Shrewsbury*, is dedicated to one *Gua---or Warinus*, and such a one was Prior of *Worcester* between the Years 1130 and 1140, who were both *Benedictines*. So far is true; but that which follows is not true, viz. that *Robert* tells *Guarinus*, That what he presents him with, is from antient and undoubted Manuscripts and Records of such Monasteries and Churches as the Virgin is known to have lived in. This is indeed what the Jesuit *J. F.* makes *Robert* say to *Guarin* in his pretended Translation of him; and this is what the *New Editor* in 1712 transcribes from *J. F.* and puts upon his poor Pilgrims; but *Robert* says no such thing: His Words are these, *Partim per Scedulas in Ecclesiis Patriæ, in qua deguisse dinoscitur, collegi: partim quorundam Sacerdotum relationibus addidici, quos & Antiquitas veneranda commendabat, & quorum verbis fidem adhibere ipse Religionis habitus compellebat*: In *English* thus; *The Life of the Blessed Virgin Wenefrede, which I have lately made and sent to you, I have partly collected from the scattered Accounts I found in Writing in the several Churches of the Country, in which she is known to have conversed and lived; and partly learn'd from the Relations of sundry Priests, whose venerable Age recommended them to me, and whose very Garb and Habit constrained me to believe what they said*. This is *Robert's* Account of the Materials out of which he composed his Work, and how he came by them: which, in my Opinion, falls very short of ancient and undoubted Monuments; nor is there one Word about Monasteries, nor any thing to signify the Sanctity of Life, or great Learning of the Priests, his Informers and Instructors. They might be very holy, and learned too, according to the Times; but *Robert* does not tell us so. Those are the Flourishes of *J. F.* the Jesuit, who thought a bare Translation of the Words of his Author would not make so much for the Credit of his Work as he believed it ought to have: But this is what I would have the Popish Readers now and then complain of to their Priests, and tell them that the Protestants take notice of their Want of Honesty and good Faith in Matters of this Sort. Whatever *Robert's* Sincerity might be in writing this Life, I assure the Reader, the Translator has not shewn any great Marks of his own; for besides what I have already taken notice of, he has made other Additions even in the Author's Dedication-Epistle, which are not in the Original.



Original. *Robert* tells *Guarinus*, that the second Motive to his writing the Life was the Love he bore to the Virgin; that her great Merits being set forth, due Honour might be paid her by the Faithful. *Secundario, Virginis amor, quo declaratis ipsius meritis, honor ei debitus à Fidelibus impenderetur.* This was too poor and modest for the *Jesuit*: He translates it thus; The second was my especial Love and Devotion to this most renowned Virgin and Martyr of our Country, that by her Sanctity and great Merits, here by me declared, she might by faithful Souls be the more devoutly honoured, served, and prayed unto. He also translates *Veridicorum assertione contestata*, by certain and undoubted Relations; the Word *Vitam* by eminent Sanctity and Graces. Now this is not to translate another's Words, but to write one's own Sense; and yet the Popish Readers are made to believe, that *Robert* wrote these things 500 Years since, whereas in truth it was *J. F.* the *Jesuit* that wrote them in 1635, and I know not who that published them again in 1712. But before I leave this Head, I desire the Reader to consider whether this had not been a most proper Place for *Robert* to have told us, That he had collected some of his Materials from the Accounts that *Elerius* left, had he heard of any such Writings?

“ That *Robert* omits what is less certain, as her Journey to *Rome*, and other Passages, not sufficiently attested: So nice and scrupulous was the good *Prior*, not to recommend any thing to Posterity, which was not uncontrollable Matter of Fact.

*Robert* says, he purposely left out her Journey to *Rome*, and other common Stories that went about concerning *Wenefrede*, because he found them in no Books, nor handed about by any People whom he could trust. He had not therefore seen the Life of *Wenefrede*, above mentioned, written by a nameless Author, which says she went to *Rome*—*Romam, ut memorant, petiit, visitandi causa Sanctorum Apostolorum loca.* And who can tell us, why a Man should scruple to believe she made a Journey to *Rome*, who firmly believed that she lived at least fifteen Years, after her Head was cut off, and set on again? This, I fear, is straining at Gnats, and swallowing Camels. When once a Woman's Head was cut off, and right set on again, she will as easily go from *Wales* to *Rome*, as from *Holy-well* to *Guitherin*. I ask the Reader's Pardon for this Levity; but it would raise a Man's Indignation or Contempt, to see such as call themselves the Priests of the most High God, telling the most ridiculous Stories, with a very grave and serious Air; talking about the Scruples of legendary Writers; and giving us for a true History, a Relation that is not quite so well attested and authentical as the History of *Guy of Warwick* is.

“ 'Tis true, he ought to have observed the Rules of an exact Historian, as to the Years of her Life, Death, and Translation, which he omitted. However, out of other Classical Authors, I set down the Centuries.

The Truth of it is, *Robert* might as well have set down the Years of her Birth, Beheading, Removal from one Place to another, and the Time of her second Death, with as much Certainty as any thing else he relates, for he knew them all alike. But it seems, that neither the *Schedulæ* nor the living Priests had told him any thing about the Time of her Life, or first, or second Death. But I rather think, he was wise enough to be afraid of naming Years, and Kings Reigns, which might be examined into, and if not well ascertained, bring some Discredit on his History. In this he shewed himself as skilful a Writer, as any I have seen of the like Sort; for, in a Life of so great Length as this is, (containing 30 or 40 Pages in a small *Folio*, written in a good legible Hand) you will not meet with one Word, or Hint, from whence you can guess when *Wenefrede* lived or died. This I do not think was an Omission in *Robert*, but a wise and artful Concealment, and done with Design. However, the new Editor is resolved to supply this Defect, and to set down the Centuries, and that out of Classical Authors too; the Meaning of which, I confess, I do not comprehend, having, ever since I was at School, understood that Word otherwise.

“ To proceed with greater Security, I also take for my Guide, that learned Antiquary, and accurate Annalist, the R. F. *Michael Alford*, S. J. who in his 2d Tome, printed 1663, treats at large this Subject.

*Alford* does indeed give us the Life of *Wenefrede* at large, and makes many Observations to his Purpose, as he goes along, upon it; but still it is the Life that *Capgrave* gives us, for he had never seen the Life that was written by *Robert*. He takes it indeed for the Life that was written by *Robert*, and so far he is in the right; for *Capgrave* abbreviated *Robert's* Life, and put it into his *Legend of English Saints*; and F. *Alford* is so ingenuous as to cite it, ---*Robert Salop, apud Capgrave*; and *Robertus Abbas, ut eum refert Capgravius*: Which makes it evident, that he had not, at that Time, seen the original Life, written by *Robert*, which is four times bigger than the Abbreviation.

“ I likewise read attentively the Church-History of the R. F. *Serenus Cressy*, set forth in 1668; who in the Preface acquaints the Reader, that altho' great part of his Volume is owing to F. *Alford*, he has other ancient Records to assist him in carrying on the Work. This religious Author being of the holy Order of St. *Benedict*, I rationally supposed that he might have such Manuscripts in Custody, as



“ came not to the Knowledge of other Writers, which possibly had been secured by  
 “ the *Body*, at the Dissolution of Monasteries. Neither of them vary as to the Re-  
 “ lation of her Life and Death; they only differ in a Name or two, viz. *Trebuith* for  
 “ *Thewith*, and *Caradocus* for *Cradocus*, who imbrued his Hands in the holy Virgin's  
 “ sacred Blood.

*Cressy's Church-History* is a very poor Work, undertaken for the sake of the *English* Readers, and to serve instead of the old *Legendary*, which was grown a little out of Fashion; but it has little or nothing in it, which is not translated from *M. Alford*; and of the Story of *Wenefrede* he says nothing (because he knew nothing) but what the *Jesuit* had said before. As for the *Benedictines* having secured any considerable Manuscripts, at the *Dissolution* of Monasteries, 'tis a Fancy that has run in many People's Heads, but without any good Grounds. The *Protestants* would be as glad as themselves, that they had so done; but since 150 Years have produced little or nothing of that Kind from these *Fathers*, we must, I doubt, be content with what we have at home. As to the exact Agreement betwixt those two Writers, it will easily happen, when one of them translates from the other; and if they had differed in more material Points than those mentioned, it had been no great Matter, for they tell but one and the same silly Story, from one and the same *Legend*.

“ Doubtless you will observe, that this Edition of St. *Wenefride's* Life, is rather to  
 “ be look'd upon as a Re-impression, with some Amendments, of the former Book, set  
 “ forth in the Year 1635, by *J. F.* of the Society of *Jesus*; which he translated  
 “ from a very ancient (as he declares) and authenticall Manuscript of Robert Prior of  
 “ Shrewsbury.

'Tis better, I think, to hear what *J. F.* says himself in his Preface: ---*Whose Book* (meaning *Robert's*) copied truly out of an old authenticall Manuscript, I have here, in Sense, faithfully translated; so that *J. F.* translated from a Copy, not from an authenticall Manuscript itself. But that which is more to the Purpose to observe, is, that he tells us he translated *Robert's Book in Sense*; i. e. he did not translate it according to the Letter, because he says, *The Author's old Phrases were scarcely expressible in good English*. I must own, that it is very hard to translate an old *Latin Legend*, into good, or into tolerable English; and therefore many times we must be content with the Sense of the Writer, where his Words cannot be well turned; but then, in all these Cases, an honest Man will be obliged to vary as little as is possible, from the Sense which the Words give most naturally. The Translation of *J. F.* the *Jesuit* is, in this Respect, very faulty: He varies when there is no manner of Need; and when the Words are plain, and might be very literally translated. His Translation is not much above Half what it would have been, had he translated it literally, so that he has left out a great deal; and in other Places he has added things of his own Head, which his Author thought not of; and I am confident there is not a Chapter in the whole Book, where he has not translated something very wrong, and made either more or less of it, than the Author intended. Whoever will be at the Pains to compare the *Latin* with the *English*, will wonder, as I do, that he should say, *He had faithfully translated Robert, in Sense*. I have given a Specimen of his Fidelity in the Preface, and it is really so, more or less, throughout the whole Work. And yet, after all, his Book may much more properly be called a Translation of *Robertus Salopienfis*, than the new Edition of *Wenefrede's* Life put out in 1712, can be called a Re-impression of *J. F.* the *Jesuit's* Book; for the latter is exceedingly unlike the former.

“ The two first Letters of his Name, and Calculation of the Time when *F. Al-*  
 “ *ford* lived, brings to my Thoughts, that very probably it was he who englished it:  
 “ For *Cressy* tells me in his Preface, that altho' he published his Tomes under the  
 “ borrowed Name of *Alford*, aliàs *Griffith*, his real Paternal Name was *John*  
 “ *Flood*.

*F. Alford* was born in 1585, and died in 1653; and might therefore very well translate *Robertus* in 1635, and put it out, under the Name of *J. F.* But I have this Objection against it, that *J. F.* translated *Robertus Salopienfis*, and therefore saw, and had that Book in his Hands; whereas it appears that *F. Alford* never saw *Robertus's* Life, but cites it out of *Capgrave*; and yet he lived 18 Years after the Year 1635, in all which Time he might have amended that Passage, and very probably would have taken Notice of *Robert's* History of the Translation of St. *Wenefrede's* Bones to *Shrewsbury*, which he mentions in his Annals of 1138, but mentions out of *Capgrave* still, who has but a Line or two about it. This makes me conclude that *J. F.* was not *M. Alford*.

“ I owe so much Deference to the Memory of this learned Man, whose Merits  
 “ are known by his elaborate Works, and who had the Perusal of the most ancient  
 “ Records of *Britain*, that you will find little more than the Substance of your for-  
 “ mer Book: Yet must have Leave to say, that the English of it is so obsolete, and  
 “ the



“ the tackings of the Words together so much differing from the present way of  
 “ Writing, that most People desired it might appear something more polished. I  
 “ may add, that 'tis a difficult Matter to procure a Copy; and on this Account, those  
 “ devoted to our *sacred Patroness*, languished after a fresh Supply from the Press.

I have no Purpose to detract any thing from the Praise of F. *Alford*, (who is here taken to be J. F.) I have a Respect for all Men who endeavour to do what Honour and Service they can to their native Country. His 4 Volumes of *Annals* are not generally had in that Esteem that I think they deserve; his Industry and Diligence are very great, and his Method is very easy and useful. As to the new Edition of J. F.'s Book, I know not how it can be called so; it is by no means the same Book: It treats of the same Subject, but in a very different Manner; some things are left out, and others are put in, and the Language much altered; but whether it be mended by *polishing*, I will not determine. Plain English, after all, is the best Language, and will live longest; but plain English is not very fit for a *religious Romance*; and I take those People who languish after a new and polished Edition of St. *Wenefrede's* Life, to be Lovers of *strange Stories*. But, in good earnest, how can any serious Christians call St. *Wenefrede*, our *sacred Patroness*? This is Language proper for the History of the *seven Champions*, where St. *George* is for *England*, St. *Andrew* for *Scotland*, St. *James* for *Spain*, &c. Countries in which they never set their Foot. But is it thus, that St. *Wenefrede* is *Patroness* of *Wales*? I doubt it is a much more serious and religious Matter; and of this I say that serious Christians ought to be ashamed. My Opinion is, that there are no such *Patrons* or *Patronesses*, appointed by God, over several Countries; or that take of their own accord, the Care of such a Nation, Region, City, Town, or District, in particular. But should I ever fall into this superstitious Dotage, and grow fond of any Saint's particular Protection, (either distrustful that of God, or, through a false Humility, not daring to approach his Throne immediately myself) I hope I should have the good Sense and Discretion left me to choose a *Saint*, of whose *Being*, and *Grace*, and *Virtue*, and *Religion*, I might rest as well assured, as I am that there is any such Place of Happiness as *Heaven*, or any Saint therein. I would choose the blessed *Virgin*, or an *Apostle*, or some old and celebrated Saint and Martyr, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, or *Cyprian*, or some such one as all the World agreed in honouring for their holy Life and Death. I would not choose such a Saint as *Wenefrede*, of whose very *Being* there is no manner of Certainty left to us. I would not pray to one, of whom I find no Mention made for full 500 Years, after the Time wherein she is said to have lived. I would not go on a Pilgrimage to a *Saint's Well*, whose History is only told by a *poor Monk*, that lived so long after her as 500 Years, and brings no one Writer of Name or Credit to vouch for any thing he says concerning her all that Interim, except a few loose Scraps of Paper or Parchment, in the Church Chest, or the Relations of some honest old Priests, who told him what the Stories of the Country were about her. Such a Tradition as this, is not Ground sufficient for a Christian to build a *Patronage* upon. Were I a Papist, I would not have a *Patroness* of *Prior Robert's* making, who, by being so much concerned to profit his Monastery at *Salop*, by bringing thither the Bones of *Wenefrede*, and thereby more Company, and thereby more Offerings, might possibly be tempted to say things of her, that were not exactly true. But I would ask for as good Vouchers, and authentick Writers to testify the Time she lived in, the Places she conversed in, the Death she suffered, the setting her Head again upon her Shoulders, and the second natural Death she underwent, as we have for other Saints, who are honoured without Dispute, and of whose Gifts and Graces no one doubts, nor makes any Question, either of their Life or Death. When a Saint is the *Patroness* of a Country, ought not the Country to have all the Certainty and Satisfaction that is possible, *whether*, *when*, and *how* that Saint lived and died? But *Wales* can never have this Certainty and Satisfaction of its *Patroness*, if *Wenefrede* be she, because there is no Author either in Manuscript or in Print, who lived within 500 Years of her Time, that does so much as name her Name, or say a Word about her. But this I have shewn at large, in a Chapter of Notes, upon her Life; and I only mention it here, to put the *poor Pilgrims* in mind, how ill they are used, and how their Priests impose upon their Understanding, when they send them, so many Miles, to pray to one, of whose Existence, Life, and Death, they neither have, nor can have, any Certainty. I do not pretend, in this Place, to dispute whether it be fit for Christians to choose their Patrons in Heaven, to pray to Saints, and go in Pilgrimages to their Shrines; but I say, if all these things were lawful and allowed, nay good and profitable, yet would it be a foolish and unreasonable thing, to pitch upon a Name, and place her as a Saint in Heaven, whom I have no sufficient Reason to believe ever to have lived upon the Earth; or, if she lived at all, that she lived in the Fear of God, and died in his Favour; of whom, in a Word, I know no more, than what a Monk hath told me, in a most miserable Account of her.

“ I have kept myself so close to the historical Part, that altho' frequent Oppor-  
 “ tunities invited to enlarge, I absolutely refused to make any Additions of my own.  
 “ I have rather abbreviated when I concluded some Periods not very material, and  
 “ this to lessen Bulk. A few Occurrences are reduced to proper Places, and some  
 “ Passages are added out of holy Scripture, to set in a truer Light the Virtues of  
 “ St. *Wenefrede* and others.

The Editor of this new Life is well assured, that there are not ten People in all the Queen's Dominions that can or will compare his Book with the Life written by *Rob. Salop*. nor many more that will compare it with the pretended Translation of J. F. *Jesuit*, put out in 1635. But I, who have read them all, (and more of this bad Kind) can assure the Reader, that the Additions, Abbreviations, Omissions and Changes



Changes made by this new Editor, have made it a very different Book from either of the other; and if I may speak my Mind freely, as I do it without Contempt or Ill-will, I profess seriously that *Robert's* Book is by much the best; *i. e.* considering who he was, and when he lived, the most excusable of all the *Three*. As to the Passages of holy Scripture, which are here added, they are, I confess, so needless, and so oddly applied, that were there no better Use to be made of them, I should be inclined to think with the Papists, that the People were not much injured, in being debarred from reading them.

“ What is said of St. *Beuno's* Nobility, I relate out of an unquestionable Manuscript.

He should have told us of what Authority his Manuscript was, for I have procured a Copy of *Beuno's* Life, from an unquestionable MS. in which his Nobility is a little otherwise derived, than it seems to be in his; and till I know the contrary, I shall take mine to be the more authentic: But I submit it to the Reader, to judge if any Descent can be greater than that which follows.

*Saint BEUNO's Pedigree.*

*Beuno* the Son of *Bugu*, the Son of *Gwynlliw*, the Son of *Tegid*, the Son of *Cadell Drynlluc*, the Son of *Categyrn*, the Son of *Gorthreyrun*, the Son of *Gorthegyrn*, the Son of *Kyllegyrn*, the Son of *Debeuwynt*, the Son of *Eudegan*, the Son of *Euddegem*, the Son of *Elud*, the Son of *Eudos*, the Son of *Eudolen*, the Son of *Afallach*, the Son of *Amalech*, the Son of *Belym*, the Son of *Anna*, the Mother of that *Anna* that was Cousin-German to the Virgin *Mary* the Mother of Christ.

Thus is *Beuno's* Nobility unquestionable by any reasonable Man, confirmed by two such Manuscripts. I have printed his Life at the End, that the Reader might see, that *Beuno* and *Wenefrede* were not only nearly allied, (as this new Life tells us) but that there were many concordant Passages and Accidents in their Lives; or, at least, that they who wrote their Legends thought so: And I shall be obliged to any learned Popish Priest, who will tell me, why *Beuno's* Life is not as credible, in all its Parts, as that of *Wenefrede*.

“ And I presumed, that the Supplement of a few late Miracles would add Fuel to the Fire of Devotion.

A true undoubted Miracle, and well attested, is of great Force and Efficacy, both to beget, confirm, and increase Faith and Devotion; but monstrous Stories, and impertinent Relations, beget Contempt of Miracles, and prejudice the Christian Faith exceedingly.

“ You'll find me faithful to the Author; my only Apprehension is, that I have been deficient in the Saint's due Praises.

'Tis impossible to be faithful to *Robertus Salopiensis*, and at the same Time to be deficient in the Praises of his Saint *Wenefrede*. My Opinion is, however, that the Author of this new Life has been neither faithful to the one, nor deficient to the other.

“ Some perchance may think I am too liberal in the Elogium; for we are fallen into an Age of Infidelity, and we are dreadfully over-run with *Deists*, I wish not with *Atheists* too, who sap the very Foundations of Revealed Religion, and allow equal Credit to the *Alcoran* and *Talmud*, they do to the Old and New Testament. Such as will not believe that the Rod of *Aaron* commanded Streams from a dry Rock, or that *Lazarus* rotting in his Tomb returned to Life, will droll upon St. *Wenefrede's* Well, and her *Resuscitation*. As if there were no Mean between too credulous a Belief, and the Madness of believing nothing at all, when shocking our wild Fancy, though back'd with the strongest Evidence of Human Authority.

That there are *Atheists* in the Kingdom I have Reason to believe, and *Deists* in much greater Number; but that this wicked Number is so prodigiously great at present, and so exceedingly increased within these few Years, is what I cannot easily allow, although it is so much the common Cry, that not to fall in with it is enough to make one pass for one of that bad Number with many People. But I know that it has served the Purpose of some designing Men so well, to have the Date of *the Growth of Infidelity* fixed to or about the Time of the *late Revolution*, that I very much suspect the Truth of the Fact upon that very Account; nor do I at all wonder that the *Popish* Party does so readily chime in with that, and all other Cries that tend to the depreciating that *great Deliverance*, that might have proved so fatal to their Interest. And yet, of all Men living, none can declaim against the *Atheists* and the *Deists* increasing in *England* with a worse Grace, or can be less in earnest, than the *Popish Priests*, as well because it is, as it were, the Rain and Sun-shine that procures them the more plentiful Harvest; as also, that nothing in the World does



does more naturally beget, promote, and increase Contempt of all *Revealed Religion*, than the seeing the grossest Corruptions of *Poper*y pretend to stand upon the same Bottom, claiming the same Sanction and Authority, and requiring the same Belief, and Reverence, and Obedience with the most plain and undisputed Articles of our common Christian Faith, and our most necessary Duties. This is too large a Field to enter on in general; but who would not be tempted to believe the Fables in the *Talmud* and the *Alcoran* are full as credible as the Relations of the Old and New Testament, if the Story of *Wenefrede's* Head being set on again, and of the springing of her *Well* just in that Place and Time, and all the Miracles related of her, must be told with the same Assurance, believed with the same Faith, entertained with the same Certainty, and compared with the Relations of *Moses's* striking the Rock, and the Waters flowing thereupon, and with our Saviour's raising *Lazarus* from the Dead? If *Robert of Salop's* History be of equal Credit and Authority with the Accounts of *Moses* and *St. John*, it will not be in any body's Power to make the Credit of the Old and New Testament greater than that of the *Talmud* and the *Alcoran*; because the *Talmud* and the *Alcoran* are certainly of equal Credit with the Life and Death of *Wenefrede*. Such as will not believe the Miracles of the Old and New Testament, will droll upon *Wenefrede's Well* and her *Refuscitation*; no doubt of it: But they who disbelieve the latter, will not necessarily disbelieve the former, unless you tell them that they stand upon the same Bottom, and have the same Authority. If the Story of *Wenefrede* be as well attested as the Account of *Lazarus*, they will deserve and have the same Credit. But he who tells me this, and tells me at the same time, that the Story of *Wenefrede* depends upon the Credit of *Prior Robert*, tells me (in Truth and in Effect) that *St. John* is of no more Authority: And I would fain know who it is, in this Case, that saps the Foundations of Revealed Religion? who it is that brings the Miracles of the Old and New Testament into Contempt or Disesteem? But to save himself from these Consequences, he tells us, *There is a Mean betwixt believing too much, and believing nothing, though back'd with the strongest Evidence of Human Authority.* There is a Mean betwixt these two Extreams without doubt; but then he should have told us what Parts of this admirable Life we were obliged to believe; which were most credible, which less, which not at all. Now this is not the Case of Scripture Histories, which are intirely to be credited; and no one Part of the Relation more than another; and therefore are not, in my Opinion, without Impiety, to be compared with any Legendary Stories.

" Others, by the Misfortune of Education (whom I truly compaffionate) will be  
" something out of Humour, when they find undoubted Miracles in that Church,  
" which they reject.

No considering Man either does or can deny, that God may work Miracles, *whensoever, wheresoever*, and by *whomsoever* he pleases. He has certainly wrought them by *Jews*, by *Gentiles*, and by *Christians*; and he may do so still, if he please. I do not doubt but that he does at this Day, according as his Wisdom and his Goodness leads him, work many Miracles among the *Turks*, the *Persians*, and the *Moors*, the *Indians*, and the *Heathens* of all Sorts; and with the *Protestants* as well as *Papists*. And why then should a Protestant be out of Humour to find undoubted Miracles in the Church of *Rome*? A Protestant would neither turn *Turk*, nor *Jew*, nor *Gentile*, though he should see that God wrought Miracles among them; and why should he turn *Papist* on the like account? I believe he may safely do it, whenever he sees undoubted Miracles wrought by God, on purpose to attest the Truth of any Point of *true Popery*, in which the two Religions differ: But there is no Reason why a Protestant should turn *Papist*, because Miracles are wrought amongst *Papists*, (if you will take their Word for it) because they may be wrought to attest the Truth of *Common Christianity*, or for some other good Purpose of God, that has no Relation to the Points in Controversy. But that which this *New Editor* means by this, is, that Protestants will be out of Humour to find undoubted Miracles wrought by *Wenefrede*, who was of the Church of *Rome*. But I believe there will not be many Protestants out of Humour upon this Account, because I think there will be no undoubted Proofs; 1. That ever there was such a Woman in Being; nor, 2. That she was of the Church of *Rome*; nor, 3. That she ever wrought any undoubted Miracles, either living or dead.

" How the primitive Pastors, as *St. Beuno*, whose Feast is celebrated on the 14th  
" of *January*, and *St. Elerius's* on the 13th of *June*, exhorted rich, noble, and beau-  
" tiful Virgins to renounce the World, and to consecrate themselves wholly to their  
" Blessed Redeemer by religious Vows.

I am very well assured that Men of more Authority and Worth, and of much greater Antiquity, than *Beuno* and *Elerius*, have, in their Exhortations to *Virginity*, said so many strange, exalted, hyperbolical Things in Commendation of that State, which was never appointed or commanded of God, and to the Derogation of the Sanctity of *Marriage*, which was instituted by God in the Times of Man's Innocence, and under the Reputation of whose Holiness our Saviour was himself born (altho' it was impossible he should have any other Father but God) that I am sure they can neither answer it to God, nor to their own Parents; and therefore that *Beuno* and *Elerius* should do the same, is no Wonder at all, if ever there were any such Exhortations made by them. But indeed I am not satisfied that we have any good Proofs of any thing but their Names left us; and I say the same thing of them that I say of *Wenefrede*, that no Author has so much as named their Names that lived 500 Years within the Time assigned for their living. And I believe it is the good *Prior of Shrewsbury* that must vouch for them all, or my *Anonymous* Writer, who yet says nothing of *Elerius*. And in Affirmance of my Opinion, I have transcribed an old *British Calendarium* out of the *Cotton-Library* above 500 Years old. It is in *Vespas. A. 14.* and the Title is, *De Sanctis Wallicis Calendarium.* *St. Bernard* is in it, by which we know it cannot be older than 1153,



when he died, or about ten Years after, when he was Canonized. Now in this *Calendarium* of *Welsh Saints* in particular, and written after *Robert* had written the Life of *Wenefrede*, there are no such Names as *Wenefrede*, or *Beuno*, or *Elerius*, to be found in it; which is a kind of Demonstration that these three Names were not at that Time in any great Repute for Sanctity, or working Miracles.

“ How on this Account *St. Wenefrede* offered herself a Sacrifice to preserve her  
 “ vowed Virginity; which pure Oblation was so acceptable to God, that he recom-  
 “ penced it with such a stupendous Miracle, as neither the precedent (says *Cressy*) nor  
 “ subsequent Ages of the Church (save that at *St. Paul's Decollation*) could afford one  
 “ to equal it.

Never was so ridiculous a Legend founded on so weak a Bottom. Take the whole Story for a certain Truth. A young Prince one *Sunday Morning* comes to a Lord's House, and finds his only Daughter all alone, and immediately falls in Love with her, and tells her, If she will but lie with him, he will certainly marry her afterwards, and make her a Princess. She being virtuously disposed, and having vowed to be a Nun, makes her Excuse at present, and tells him she will wait upon his Highness by and by, when she is better prepared for his Reception; and under this Pretence gets out at a Back-Door, and runs as fast as she can towards the Church, in hopes she might be there secure from his Attempts: The Prince immediately pursues and overtakes her e'er she could get thither, and asking her once more if she would yield to his Desires, and being told she was already engaged to Christ, and could not possibly do it, he was so enraged, that he drew out his Sword, and cut her Head off presently. Now, I desire to know, where is the extraordinary Merit of this Virgin in all this Matter? Can one reasonably suppose, that there is any one honest Maid in all *Flyntshire* that would not do as much as *Wenefrede* did to avoid a furious Ravisher, and save her Virtue? and that too for very Honesty's sake, without the Obligation of a Vow to become a veiled Nun? I have no great Opinion of the Virtue of this Author's *Devout Pilgrims*, as if it were any ways beyond or above the Virtue of those who stay at home: But yet I hope that not a single one of *all those tender Virgins who tremble at a Northern Blast, yet sink with such Alacrity under the Waters of Holy-well*, would behave herself any worse than *Wenefrede* here did; she would, I hope, reject with Scorn so scandalous and wicked a Proffer, made by a Man of little better Quality than herself, and that at the first Visit too. I hope she would make as good Excuses for Delay, and get away as fast as she could from him; and should he overtake her in the *Common* or the *Street*, and tempt her there again, I hope she would have the Virtue to refuse him, and endure the utmost that he in his wicked Rage could do to her. Yet this is all that *Wenefrede* is said to have done, taking good *Father Robert's* Word for the Truth of all that passed. This is the Virtue, this the Merit, this the pure Oblation, that was so acceptable to God, that he must work so stupendous a Miracle to recompence it, that no Age past, or to come, could afford one equal to it, excepting that at the Beheading of *St. Paul*; the Veins of whose Head and Neck did not, it seems, bleed *Blood*, but *Milk*; and whose Head, when it was new cut off, made three Leaps, in each of which Places immediately sprang up a *Well* of sweet Water. But with the Favour of *F. Cressy*, the Preference is still due to *Wenefrede*; for though three Springs are more than one, yet did the Head of *St. Paul* lie quiet at the last, and was not again united to its Neck, to live full fifteen Years after (as useful a Head as it was) which was the Case of *Wenefrede*. And to shew I have no Prejudice to this, or any other *British* Saint, I assure the Reader I take the Story of this Rise of *Wenefrede's Well*, to be full as true as that of *St. Paul's three Springs*. And I cannot tell whether I ought not to be ashamed to be found more knowing in these Matters than *F. Cressy*, who thinks *St. Wenefrede's* Case to be only equalled by that of *St. Paul*; whereas I know a great many Cases that are equal, if not superior to them both, if it would do any Good to produce them here: He who would see them, may look into the Chapter of *Miracles*, or that of *Waters*.

“ These Men are unwilling to hear, how *St. Beuno* despised his Hereditary Patri-  
 “ mony and Glory, to become a poor Minister of the Gospel. How in the primitive  
 “ Times the Holy Mass was offered to the Eternal Father, to apply the Fruits of our  
 “ Redemption: How Sacred Reliques were honoured; and praying for the Faithful  
 “ departed was practised, as *St. Elerius* confided *St. Wenefrede* would do for his Soul,  
 “ he being of Opinion that she would survive him.

'Tis a common thing for the Writers of this low Kind, to mix and confound the Times of which they write with the Times in which they live; and in speaking of the former, to describe the Manners and the Customs of the latter. The Doctrines delivered by *Robert* in the Life of *Wenefrede* are certainly the Doctrines of *Robert's* Days; but it does not follow that they were the Doctrines of the Days when *Wenefrede* is supposed to have lived. I do not say they were not, but I say that *Robert's* Authority does not prove they were; that must be proved by Writers of that Age and Century. And yet this is the Fallacy that *M. Alford* would put upon his Readers; he would have them take for granted, that the Doctrines in the Life of *Wenefrede*, written 500 Years after, were the Doctrines of the *British Church* 500 Years before; which, were it really true, yet it is not to be proved in that manner to any one's Conviction. The Time allotted by *Alford*, *Cressy*, and those who follow them, to *St. Wenefrede's* Living, is about the Year 660. I know they have no good Grounds to go upon, in assigning this rather than any other Time, for the Time in which she lived; for *Robert* is silent in the Matter, and after *Robert* comes no body for above 400 Years, that pretends to tell us when she lived. But I dispute not when she lived; let it be in 660,



as they pretend to guess; I only ask by what Figure those Times are called *Primitive Times*, and the Doctrines then in Fashion *Primitive Doctrines*? But, after all, why should he think a Protestant unwilling to hear that *Beuno* left a great Estate, and all his Honour, to become a poor Minister of the Gospel, when he is glad to hear that the Apostles forsook all and followed Christ, and reads with Pleasure, that many rich and honourable Persons did the like in After-Ages? What Harm is this to a Protestant? As for offering the Holy Mass to the Eternal Father, to apply the Fruits of our Redemption, it is what I do not sufficiently understand, nor I believe this *New Editor* himself; but of this I am sure, that there is no such thing said in *Robert's Life of Wenefrede*: His Expressions are, the celebrating Mass, and celebrating the Divine Mysteries; and further he goes not. What Occasion has a Protestant to be disturbed at hearing that People of old honoured Reliques, when he himself would honour them, were he assured they were the Reliques of Christ's Saints and Martyrs? What a ridiculous Thing is it, to fancy that Protestants have not the same Curiosity, and the same Affections that Papists have in those Matters, could they believe they were not cheated in the Wares? They would not prostrate themselves before an old Shoe, though they were sure it were St. *Cyprian's*; they would not lift up Eyes or Hands to him in Prayer on that Account, nor rub any Beads upon it; they would do nothing silly, nothing superstitious to it, or before it; but I believe they would give Money for it, they would look often on it, consider its Shape, and Make, and Matter, preserve it carefully, and would not lose it for a considerable Price; and I know not whether they would not value it equally with his Foot. The Difference betwixt us is, that we are longer in believing such a Relique belonged to such a Saint than the Papists, and do not afterwards think it can work so great Miracles as they are apt to think. And, lastly, why should a Protestant be loth to believe, that praying for the Faithful departed was heretofore practised, when he knows, (if he be a Scholar) that some People did actually pray for the Virgin Mary and the Apostles, and other holy Men and Women, when they were sure, and owned that they were sure, they were in Heaven and happy? What is all this to the Purpose, unless it be made our Duty, enjoined by God, or plain that it is useful to the Living and the Dead? Has not a Protestant as much natural Affection to his Relations, as much Kindness to his Friends, and as much Compassion to all Christians, as a Papist has? And what should keep him then from praying for such as departed this Life in a less safe Condition than he fears they should, but that he finds no manner of Ground in God's Word to believe that any thing we do can alter that Condition for the better? That since the Holy Ghost has said, that every Man must give an Account to God of his own Works done in the Flesh, it would be strange that another's Prayers, or Alms, or Fastings, or Oblations, should atone, or be accepted for my Transgressions, when I am dead. All Men are willing to believe the things that make for their Security, their Ease, and Interest, and therefore Protestants can have no Prejudice against these Doctrines, but that they are persuaded there is neither Reason nor Revelation to support them. But after all, *Elerius* does not say that *Wenefrede* should pray for him, when dead; he says he was glad that God had sent her to that Place to bury him, when dead; *Meique Memoriam post Obitum meum habituram*, and to make honourable Mention of him after his Decease; for so he explains it afterwards, *Qui & me sepeliret, & hunc incolens Locum post me, celebrem illum faceret*, for which he said he had prayed to God: Not but that People did, in *Elerius's* supposed Time, pray for the Dead; and that *memoriam habere* does also signify to remember the Dead, by reading in the *Diptychs* the Names of the Deceased, as was the Custom of much elder Times; but it signifies here no more than remembering him, when dead, with Honour.

“ If these Christian Articles are to be set aside, and antiquated, by Consequence  
 “ general Councils, canonized Doctors, and ancient Histories, must be suppressed  
 “ and repealed, as delivering and encouraging the same primitive Doctrine.

Voluntary Vows of Poverty, honouring Reliques, and praying for the Dead, tho' they should all of them be innocent and allowable, yet might be safely laid aside, not only without Prejudice, but to the Advantage of Christianity. They are, at the best, great Snares, Occasions of many Errors, and the Foundation of a world of superstitious Practices; they help to fill the Monasteries and Nunneries, and furnish out Processions and fine Shows; and by feeding the Fire of Purgatory, they provide a good Income for the Priests. But Christ's Religion was compleat before these Things were thought on; and so it would be, tho' all the Councils, Doctors, and ancient Histories that treat of these Articles, were at the Bottom of the Sea, never to rise again.

“ Quick-sighted *Alford* foresaw it expedient, if not necessary, to solve an Objection  
 “ which some captious Criticks might glory in, viz. Why *V. Bede* makes no Mention  
 “ of glorious St. *Wenefrede* in his History: He answers, That *Bede*, *Malmesbury*, *Hun-*  
 “ *tington*, and other ancient Authors, who wrote at large of some Saints, are silent in  
 “ the Praise of our *Virgin Martyr*, because they only recorded the Acts and Monu-  
 “ ments of their respective Saints and Churches. *V. Bede* in particular declares he  
 “ only designed to write the History of his own Nation, which was the *English Saxon*.  
 “ Hence he makes no mention of St. *Patrick*, St. *Ursula*, *David*, *Dubritius*, *Kenti-*  
 “ *gern*, who were illustrious Lights of the *British* Church. *Alford* adds, that there  
 “ being an irreconcilable Separation betwixt the *Britons* and *Saxons*, not only as to  
 “ Distance of Place, but likewise as to Tempers and Affections, all manner of  
 “ Commerce



“ Commerce was interdicted; infomuch that *V. Bede*, who lived and died in the  
 “ North of *England*, could not have such certain Knowledge of what passed in the  
 “ West, as to insert it in his History.

I have, in the *Chapter of Notes*, urged this Objection farther than *Alford* could think fit to do, and considered his Answer so thoroughly, that I will say but very little to it here, and refer the Reader to that Chapter, if he require more Satisfaction. *V. Bede*, as much a Stranger as he was to the *British* Affairs, and notwithstanding all the Enmity betwixt the Nations, yet wrote the History of *St. Alban*, and of *SS. Julius* and *Aaron*, who were *Britons*, and suffered at *Caerleon* upon *Usk*; and, I believe, if ever he had heard of *Wenefrede*, he could not have forbore telling us her Story: So would *Stephen Haddius* his Contemporary in his Life of *Wilfride* Archbishop of *York*, where he has often Occasion to talk of the *Britons*, whom he always calls *Schismaticks*, because they would not keep their *Easter* on the same Day with the *Romish* Church, nor make any use of the *Pope's* Barbers, but polled their Priests Heads by a Pattern of their own. I say the same thing of *W. Malmesbury*, *Huntington*, *Ethelward*, *Ingulfus*, *Florentius Wigorn*; of *Roger Hoveden*, *Roger of Wendover*, *Robert de Monte*; *Walter Hemingsford*, *Matthew Paris*, *Matthew Westminster*; and, in a word, of all the Writers, good and bad, from *Bede* to *Ranulph Higden* a Monk of *Chester*, about the Year 1360. There is not one of them has so much as named her Name, till the last put her Story into eighteen or twenty monkish Latin Rhymes, and gave it us, in a Poem, intitled *De Laudabilibus Walliæ*. The Answer to all this is, it seems, that they were all of them *Anglo-Saxons*, ignorant or envious Writers, or who had something else to do, than to take any notice of foreign Saints. But this will never pass upon any Man, who has ever read all, or any of these Authors. There is not one of them who would not have gone a hundred Miles, as it were, out of his way, to have told the Story of *Wenefrede's* Head being set on again upon her Shoulders; not one of them who would not sooner have left out a whole King's Reign, than *Wenefrede's* Resuscitation, had he believed or heard of any such thing. You may be confident, therefore, that the utter Silence of each and all of these Historians, did not proceed from any Design, Spite, or national Pique, but from pure Ignorance of the Matter. That *Bede* makes no mention of *St. Patrick*, *Dubrice*, *David*, and *Kentigern*, is indeed an Argument to me, (considering the Temper of the good Man) that he knew nothing of them. But supposing that he had heard of their great Virtues, and yet would make no mention of Men or Things that were foreign to his History, (which yet is not his Way) does any one think it possible he should have concealed the Story of *Wenefrede*, had he known it? The rest of the Saints were very extraordinary Persons indeed, and famous in their Day, but not one of them had his Head cut off, and set on again, which makes, you know, a great Difference betwixt *St. Wenefrede* and them. But the Force of the Objection does not lie in the Silence of *V. Bede* alone, but in the Silence of all Writers whatsoever, that treat of our Affairs, not only *Anglo-Saxons*, but of *Nennius*, *Affer Menevensis*, *Jeffery of Monmouth*, *Caradoc of Lancarvan*, and of (one as good as all in this Point) *Giraldus Cambrensis*; who were all of them *Britons*, Historians, and very good Believers; of whom I have given an Account (as I said) in another Place, to which I must needs refer the Reader, if he be any ways scrupulous.

“ In this little Undertaking, I looked on myself as a *Debtor to the Unwise*, as  
 “ well as to the *Wise*; therefore in handling the Subject, I avoided all quaint and un-  
 “ common Expressions, as might require Study in the Vulgar. Plainness of Style,  
 “ without Theatre-Dress, best becomes those who write to inform and edify the  
 “ meanest State and Condition.

The Editor of this Book, if he were so before, is still a *Debtor to the Wise*, for, surely, he has paid them nothing in it. I am altogether of his Mind, that plain Language best becomes those, whose Purpose it is to inform and edify plain People; but he who finds himself a *Debtor to the Unwise*, should also think he ought to pay them with plain Truths, as well as plain English; and I am a little afraid that even the *Pilgrims* will not go away much edified with this poor Story he has told them.

“ I will not detain you any longer (my dear devout Pilgrims;) yet before I take my  
 “ Leave, I most humbly and earnestly crave a charitable Remembrance at the *holy*  
 “ Well; and I faithfully assure you of a grateful Return. We are all of us Passengers  
 “ in this World, and no more than Strangers and Sojourners upon Earth. Let us  
 “ unite in Prayer, for a happy finishing of our Journey, that after this mortal Pilgrimage,  
 “ we may safely arrive at the glorious Fountain of eternal Life, where we shall  
 “ be inebriated with a Torrent of Pleasure, rendring Thanks, loving and adoring our  
 “ most merciful and omnipotent God, World without End.

To this I have nothing to say, but a sincere *Amen*, as wishing both the *Author* and his *Pilgrims* all true Happiness. But I take this Opportunity, to desire the Reader not to censure me too easily, as one who has taken too much Pains, and shewn myself too much in earnest, in confuting so poor a Story as this of *Wenefrede*. *Holy-well* is a Fountain of great Superstition; and as ridiculous and idle as the Fable may appear to *Protestants*, it does not, as yet, appear so to the *Papists*: And it is for their Sake and Service that I have taken the Pains these Observations cost me; and for their Sake would take much greater, if I knew I could be useful to them in so doing.

T H E



T H E  
L I F E, M A R T Y R D O M, and M I R A C L E S  
O F  
St. *W E N E F R I D E*, &c.

**M**ANY are the evident Motives of *Credibility*, clearly distinguishing the unspotted Church of *Jesus Christ* from heterodox Persuasions, which are built on private Fancy, and for the most part on Faction. Among the rest, consummate *Sanctity*, and undeniable *Miracles*, challenge their due Places. The holy *Apostles*, before they separated to promulge the Gospel thro' the Universe, in the *Symbol* of Faith, instructed future Ages, that the *Spouse* of *Christ*, purchased with the Effusion of his most sacred Blood, is *holy*; *I believe in the holy Catholick Church*. <sup>a</sup> Other Sects pretending to Religion, lean, or to speak more properly, lead on to agreeable Liberty, which powerfully invites and brings over vast Crowds of loose Profelytes. <sup>b</sup> As to *Miracles*, which set a Seal on the *true Faith*, the immortal *Son of God* hath assured us, that those *who believe in him* shall do greater Wonders than he wrought himself, St. *John* xiv. 12. The Life of St. *Wenefride* is very conspicuous, as to both these genuine Marks of *Miracles* and *Sanctity*; as it will more clearly appear by her wonderful Actions, and the several Steps by which she arrived at so high a State of Perfection.

In the seventh Age after Man's Redemption, flourished many *Saints* of both Sexes. I shall only mention those chiefly concerned in this short History. <sup>c</sup> St. *Beuno*, the glorious Instrument of St. *Wenefride's* second Life and *Sanctity*, was born of noble Parents in *Mongomeryshire*, at the Fall of the River *Rhyw* into *Severn*, therefore called *Aberhyw*. His Father *Binsi* descended lineally from *Cadell*, Prince of *Gleswig*; and his Mother derived her Pedigree from *Anna* (who was married to the King of the *Picts*) Sister to the mighty and renowned King *Arthur*, who departed happily this Life, and was interred at *Glastenbury*, in the Year 542. His Grandfather was St. *Gundeleius*, and he was near related to several eminent *Saints*; amongst the rest, he was Cousin German to St. *Kentigern*, Bishop of *Glasgow*, who, forced from *Scotland*,

<sup>a</sup> 'Tis a new Thing to hear, that *Papists*, in great Crowds, turn *Protestants*, that they may live more loosely and more at large than they might have done in their own Communion: It will hardly be believed by any one who knows how indulgent most of their Confessors are, and what Allowances they make. I fear that neither Side has much the Advantage in Reproaches of this Nature, as to *Practice*; but certainly the *Principles* and *Rules* of *Protestants* allow of no unlawful Liberties in any kind whatever.

<sup>b</sup> It neither is nor can be literally true, that any one ever did *greater* Miracles than *Christ* did. The *Apostles* and first Disciples of *Christ* might work *more* Miracles than their Master, and their Miracles might convert *more* People to the Faith, and have a *greater* and a *quicker* Effect upon their Minds, than those which our Saviour wrought among the *Jews*. And in this Sense the Words were justified by the Event; the speedy Conversion of so great a Part of the World by so few Hands in so short a Time, as both the Scriptures and other antient Writers tell us was done, is a convincing Proof that the Servants were, in this Point, *greater* than their Master, and the Disciples than their Lord. But to imagine that any of them either did or could work greater Miracles than *Christ* did, in curing all Diseases by a Word, and in his Absence, and raising People from the Dead, and the like, is to imagine what no Man living can comprehend, and what no History, that can be credited, has ever given us any Instance or Example of. But for this I refer the Reader to *The Chapter of Miracles*, in which I have shewn, that this of St. *John* xiv. 12. is one of those abused Texts that is laid as a Foundation for the most ridiculous and most absurd Legends in the World: And that I might not want an Instance of the Application of this Text to this bad Purpose, the present Book affords me one. The Miracles of St. *Wenefrede* are, it seems, to convince us, that that Promise of our Saviour was made good in her great Works.

<sup>c</sup> See the *Life of St. Beuno*, at the End, translated from the *British MS.* in *Jesus-College, Oxon.* and which is certainly of equal Credit and Authority with the *Life of Wenefrede*, and may be of great Use in fixing the Chronology of these *Saints* Lives, which is yet somewhat doubtful.



land, founded the Bishoprick of St. *Asaph*, from his Disciple of that Name, whom he left to govern that Church.

Young *Beuno* was educated under the Direction of a holy Man called St. *Dangus*; and he advanced so fast in Perfection, that he spent two or three Days and Nights in continual Prayer, so that he was drawn with Reluctancy to refresh fainting Nature. He took an early Surfeit of worldly Vanity, he renounced the flattering Allurements of terrene Pleasures, and exchanged the glittering Grandeur of an opulent Fortune for the poor Habit of a Monk; resolving to spend the Remainder of his Days in the Practice of Evangelical Counsels. Being well settled, and thoroughly grounded in the Apostolical Institute, he observed the following laudable Practice to promote the Honour of his *Creator*. When he had built a Church and Monastery, and there established regular Discipline, he removed to some other Part of the Country to perform the like Duty to God; so that in few Years he became a common Father to numerous *Religious*, who respected him as their holy Founder.

This zealous Monk having finished his Monastery at *Clynoc Vawr* in *Carnarvanshire*, found himself powerfully inspired to visit his Relations in *Flintshire*. 'Tis true, he had long before bid *adieu* to all Ties of Flesh and Blood; but he understood this Call as a Voice from Heaven. A rich and potent Lord in that Part of *North Wales* where now *Holy-Well* is, had marry'd the virtuous and noble Lady *Wenlo*,<sup>d</sup> Sister to St. *Beuno*. His Name was *Thewith*; some write him *Trebwith*; but a Manuscript now before me, of one of the eruditest Antiquaries of the last Age, says his Name was *Tyvid*. These Parents of St. *Wenefride*, by an exemplary and truly *Christian* Life, surpass'd their high Extraction. They reckon'd solid Virtue as the most distinguishing Quality, and they pitied vicious Potentates, who are contemptible in the Eyes of the *King of Kings*. St. *Wenefride*, the Glory of *West Britain*, was born in the troublesome Reign of King *Cadwallawn*; and St. *Beuno* made his Visit to his Brother-in-Law's House, in the Reign of King<sup>e</sup> *Eluith*, the second of that Name. The venerable Monk, having with much Humility, and great Modesty, made himself known, he told them, That he was sent by *Almighty God* to honour him there, as he had done in other Places; and that he neither expected, nor craved any other Favour, than a small Parcel of his large Territories, sufficient to build a Church on; *where others, with myself* (said he) *will daily pray for your Safety and Happiness*.

*Thewith* (I shall stile him so for the future) was not in the miserable Catalogue of those thoughtless blind Worldlings, who are prodigal in Vanity and Ostentation, but start and frown at the first Proposal of parting with small Matters for the Advantage of their Souls. No, he looked forward with other Eyes, towards a more permanent Being, than here upon fordid Earth; therefore returned the following Answer:

*With*

<sup>d</sup> To satisfy his complaining *Pilgrims*, the Editor (or rather Author) of this *new Life*, is very careful to give them a very particular Account of *Wenefrede's* Relations. He tells us, her Mother was my Lady *Wenlo*, and that St. *Beuno* was her Uncle, and her Father's true Name *Tyvid*: Which are Discoveries that are owing entirely to the MS. that was before him; for *Robert of Salop* says no such thing, nor the *Oxon Life* of *Beuno*, nor the *Cotton MS.* nor any other Account, Latin or English, in Verse or Prose (for I have all before me, in sad Abundance.) However, I do not question the Editor's Sincerity herein; but only take Occasion from hence to pray these *Pilgrims* to consider upon what Uncertainties they travel, upon what poor and wretched Bottoms the Lives of their Saints are built.

<sup>e</sup> The Editor says, *Beuno* visited his Sister in the Reign of King *Eluith* the second of that Name. I believe it would puzzle the eruditest Antiquaries of all *Wales*, to tell us when, or where, *Eluith*, either First or Second, reigned. But since he copies his Mistake from J. P. the Jesuit, I will set them both right. It is in *Robertus Salopiensis* thus ---- *Pervenit ad Prædium cujusdam Magni & Potentissimi Viri, nomine Theuith, qui filius unius summi atque excellentissimi Senatoris, & à Rege secundi, Eluith nomine.* Which is in English ---- *He came to the Manor-House of a certain great and mighty Man, whose Name was Teuith; who was the Son of a most high and excellent Lord, and the very next Man to the King, whose Name was Eluith.* The Jesuit had, by construing wrong, created a new Prince of *North Wales*, (of which there was no manner of Need;) and tho' he be now deposed, yet *Wenefrede* has thereby got a Grandfather, even *Eluith*, the Father of *Teuith*, who I desire may be hereafter placed in his right Genealogical Order.



*With good Reason, holy Father, I am obliged to give you Part of the Lands I now possess, for his Sake and Service who bestowed them all upon me. You have pleased me in asking this Charity, which is more advantageous to me than to you who propose it: Therefore from this very Day, I do absolutely alienate from myself, and my Posterity, this Manor I now live in, and with Joy I surrender unto you all my Right and Title, and I put you into Possession. I humbly beg a Favour, that having one only Child, a tender Virgin, who is my special Comfort, you'll instruct her in heavenly Documents, that her Life and Conversation may be holy, pleasing to God, and joyful to her Parents. After this generous Settlement, the Nobleman made choice of a Dwelling-Seat, not far distant from the Place he had given to St. Beuno; where, on a Hill, he could see the Church where the Servants of God prais'd their Maker.*

As Constantine the Great, at the Building of St. Peter's Basilica, divesting himself of his Imperial Robes, took up the Spade, broke Ground, and carry'd twelve Baskets of Earth, in Honour of the twelve Apostles, to cast into the Foundation, in Testimony of his Devotion to the primitive Princes of Christianity; so in Imitation of this heroick Pattern, the noble Lord *Thewith* set aside State and Birth, many times putting *his own Hands* to the holy Work. This he did to encourage others, and to contribute in some sort to the finishing of the Fabrick. The Church being made fit to offer in it the <sup>f</sup> *Divine Sacrifice*, he and his Spouse, with their only Child, were daily present at holy *Mafs*. They had this pious Custom, to place their Daughter at the *Saint's Feet*, at the Time of his Exhortations to the People, advising her to give Attention to his excellent Doctrine. This was not necessary, altho' religiously suggested by pious Parents; for she was so much transported with a holy Delight in hearing him preach, that she frequently visited him alone, to discourse of Self-Knowledge and *Christian Performances*.

'Twas her Parents Intention to marry her to some Nobleman of the Country, and to bestow on her a most plentiful Fortune; but her ever blessed Redeemer, in those tender Years, was disposing her sweetly for his Service. By St. Beuno's frequent Discourses, she understood how great, how good, and how glorious the heavenly Spouse was; that voluntary Virgins are like *Angels* upon Earth; that *they follow the Lamb wherever he goes*, Apoc. xiv. that the Honours of the World are vain, and its Pleasures short-liv'd; so that *the very Thought of a terrene Husband became hurtful unto her*. Wherefore she resolved to keep herself <sup>g</sup> undefiled, and to consecrate her pure Virginity to the Lord of Heaven and Earth. One main Difficulty occur'd, how to render her Parents favourable to this heavenly Call. She burned with the Love of God, and at the same time she resolved to fulfil the Commandment of *honouring Father and Mother*. In this Struggle betwixt Divine Vocation and *Christian Duty*, the Bestower of all Lights put her into a Method how to prepare the Way towards her Happiness, by making use of St. Beuno, as a glorious Instrument.

This *holy Man* was honoured as a Saint by her Parents, and by Consequence she knew very well, that he had great Power and Authority with them, and they would not reject any reasonable Request made by him, such as she took hers to be. Impatient of losing Time, for compleating her Design, having found him one Day alone, and at Liberty, she acquainted him with the holy Fruits of his moving Discourses, and after a very pathetick Manner, humbly petitioned for his zealous Concurrence, in preserving the rich Treasure of her Virginity, which she resolved never to part with, for all the Offers that the flattering World could make her. St. Beuno was agreeably surprized at this most welcome News; for, as St. Paul, he desir'd all to be  
like

<sup>f</sup> I have already observed that this is none of Robert's Expressions, but of the Editor's own making; as most of the Life hitherto is.

<sup>g</sup> St. Paul's Opinion is, that *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled*; but the Monk's Opinion is, that they who would keep themselves *undefiled*, must not marry.



like unto himself, 1 Cor. xi. 1. He had unshaken Confidence in God's Power and Goodness, that he who had begun the Work, would give it the finishing Stroke. Moreover, being no Stranger to the singular Piety of those he was to treat with, he cheerfully undertook the Task, to the unexpressible Satisfaction of the expecting Virgin.

We cannot read without flowing Tears, how faithful *Abraham*, in Obedience to God's Command, had his Hand lifted up to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, his only begotten Son, whom he loved, Gen. xxii. 2. not so much as demurring at the first Intimation of the Omnipotent; perchance it may move us to Devotion, by a serious Consideration, how the Lord *Thewith* entertained this unexpected Petition of his dear *Child*. Besides the internal Gifts of Grace, and apparent Virtues, which charmed her devout Parents, her Stature was well proportioned, her Face was matchless, her Modesty equalled her Beauty, Qualifications much admired by Mankind. She was the agreeable Object of their Eyes, the Support of their Family, and the Prospect of their Happiness upon Earth. Yet no sooner had St. *Beuno* delivered his Sentiments, as to the Nature of the Offering, That it was a sort of *Holocaust* to sacrifice their Affections, and to bequeath to their God the dearest Creature in the World, whom they loved more than they did themselves, with other persuasive Reasons to the same Effect; the holy Man, I say, had no sooner ended his Discourse, but contrary to the Weakness of other fond Parents, Tears of Joy came trickling down Lord *Thewith's* Cheeks, who, with his Spouse, broke out in the Praises of *Jesus Christ*, for so highly favouring their only *Child*. They then called for their Daughter, and gave her full and free Leave to forsake the World, wishing her a happy Progress in the Way of Perfection. They likewise declared, That the heavenly Spouse having made choice of her, they intended to make him Heir of what they designed for her Dowry, by disposing of the same, to his greater Honour, in pious and religious Uses. They drew also this Advantage to themselves, of renouncing the World, so far as was consistent with Persons in their Station. They entered into a firm Resolution of giving to the Poor great part of their Princely Wealth, of retiring from worldly Noise and Hurry, that with an undepending Freedom they might be more absolute Masters of short Time, to provide and send before them never ending Treasures in Heaven.

The pious Virgin receiving this coveted Grant, concluded that she could never return sufficient Thanks to God for the Favour. She watched whole Nights in the Church, either kneeling, or prostrate before the Altar, where she imagined to herself that she was in her immortal Spouse's Presence-Chamber. Contemplation raised her up into Admiration of His infinite Perfections; so that to hear *Jesus Christ* only named, brought joyful Tears into her Eyes from a flaming Heart. Pure Delights overflow'd her Soul, and looking towards Heaven, the World appeared base and contemptible. To add Fuel to this pleasing Fire, she procured a little Oratory near unto St. *Beuno's* Cell, to visit him with greater Ease in the Day-time, and in silent Night to practise her Master's Spiritual Lessons.

The implacable Enemy of Mankind, suspecting that such high Beginnings of Perfection in tender Years, might prove a powerful Invitation to other Noble Virgins of despising themselves and the World, employ'd one of his incarnate Emissaries to defeat the Design of the Holy Ghost. What Hell cannot effect by its own immediate Suggestions, it too frequently brings about by the insinuating Arguments of lewd Mortals. Wherefore, such as induce others to forfeit Divine Grace by mortal Sin, are detestable Instruments of rebellious Lucifer. As the Devil put into the Heart of Judas Iscariot to betray the Son of God, John xiii. 2. so he cast an impure Flame into the Heart of *Cradocus*, King *Alen's* Son, to commit a sacrilegious Rape upon *Christ's* lovely Spouse. He was sottishly enamoured with the Charms of her Person, not casting an Eye on the Beauty of her Virtues; so waited for an Opportunity to gratify his



his brutish Passion, which thus happened. One Sunday St. Wenefride's Parents being gone to Church before her, and she for a short Space detained at home on a charitable Account, soon to follow after; the Prince having Intelligence, entered the House, under Pretence of Business with the Lord *Thewith*. At first the holy Maid, not at all suspecting his Insincerity or Design, received him courteously, with the humble Apology of her Unworthiness to entertain one of his Royal Birth: *But if you please* (said she) *to repose yourself in a more convenient Room till Divine Service is ended, my Father will be at Liberty to serve you.* To this candid and obliging Answer of the bashful Virgin, *Cradocus*, now more than ever inflamed with sinful Desires, reply'd in the greatest Disorder, That nothing could be more agreeable than to stay in her Company, since it was then solely in her Power to make him happy. If she comply'd with the ardent Desires of a passionate Lover, she might expect all the Happiness his Power and Quality was capable of bestowing upon her.

Although the Virgin blush'd and trembled at the Immodesty of this wicked Proposal, yet being perfectly present to herself in the dangerous Occasion, and fortified with Divine Grace and Light from Heaven, she answer'd, That there was not the least Doubt to be made of enjoying Honours, Wealth, and worldly Happiness, by being espoused to so noble a Prince; that she was in great Confusion to be so suddenly surprized in such mean Attire, not becoming his Presence: *Wherefore permit me* (said she) *to enter my Chamber adjoining to this, to better my Dress.* *Cradocus*, in the Heat of his Passion, unwillingly gave ear to the Virgin's Petition, yet could not refuse a Request accompanied with so much Modesty and seeming Deference to his Quality. She no sooner got clear of so impudent a Guest, but slipping out privately by another Door, she immediately ran towards the Church, sure of meeting with Protection there from so villainous an Attempt. Mean time the Prince, impatient of so long a Delay, and not without Suspicion of what had happened, rush'd into the Room to which she retired; not finding her there he pursued her so eagerly, that he overtook her on the Descent of the Hill, before she could gain the Church. There with a drawn Sword in his Hand, and with Fury in his Face, he threatens to separate her Head from her Body, unless she quickly consented to his Will.

Here methinks appeared a lively Representation of the Anguish and Perplexities on every Side of chaste *Susanna*, whose Honour and Conscience was attempted by the two lascivious Judges. If she consented, *it was Death to her; and if she did not, she could not escape their Hands*, Dan. xiii. 22. The noble *Israelite* came to this final Resolution, *'Tis better for me, without the Act, to fall into your Hands, than to sin in the Sight of our Lord.* Oh! that Christians had such a Horror and Detestation of mortal Sin, to look upon it as more hideous and frightful than a violent Death. St. Wenefride was of that settled Opinion; she had two Sorts of Deaths waiting for an Answer, a Separation of the Soul from the Body, or a Separation of the Soul from God: She did not balance upon the Matter, but undauntedly and heroically reply'd, How, by her Parents Approbation, she was holily espoused to the Son of God, who infinitely exceeds all Power and Beauty upon Earth; that she would be faithful and constant in her pure Affections, and rather lose her Life, than to admit any Corral. *Neither shall your Menaces and Terrors* (said she) *draw me from the Sweetness of his Love, nor so over-awe me, as to make me recede in the least from executing what I have promised.* As it happens sometimes that despised carnal Love turns into Rage, so it fared with barbarous *Cradocus*, who seeing himself scorn'd (as he thought) gave such a deadly Blow to the Virgin's Neck, that the first Stroke severed the Head from the Body; which falling upon the Descent of the Hill, roll'd down to the Church, where the Congregation was kneeling before the Altar. As they were terrify'd with the bloody Object of her Head, so they were astonished to behold a clear and rapid Spring gushing out of that Spot of Ground her Head *had first fallen upon*, which to this very Day



is visited from all Parts by *Devout Pilgrims*. The Place of her Martyrdom had before her Death the Name of the *Dry Valley*, or *Barren Bottom*, which was changed into the Title of *Finbon*, which in old *Welsh* signifies a *Fountain* or *Well*. 'Twas also observed, that the Stones of the Well were tinctur'd with Drops, as it were, of Blood, to perpetuate the Memory of what she had shed for the Love of *Christ*; and in Process of Time 'twas taken notice of, that the Moss growing round the *Well* had a very fragrant Smell, as an Emblem of the Odour of her Angelical Virtues.

To close the last Act of this inhuman Tragedy, and to relate the dreadful Stroke of Divine Justice on the cruel *Tyrant*, we are to premise with Brevity, that the just Grief of the holy Virgin's *Parents* is not to be expressed, seeing their dear *Child* so villainously butcher'd almost before their Eyes. St. *Beuno*'s Virtue was also put to the Test, to bear with true Resignation the Loss of so devout a Creature. Tears came trickling down his Cheeks at the Sight of the horrid Murder. The afflicted People, with united Voices, called upon Heaven for speedy Execution against him who had committed that heinous Outrage. Indignation accompanied Compassion, when they beheld the unrelenting *Assassin* wiping his bloody Sword upon the Grass, and glorying in the detestable Fact, without any Fear of *God* or *Man*. St. *Beuno* was preparing to offer the *unbloody Sacrifice* of our Redemption, but being inspired by him who declared, *Revenge to me, and I will repay it*, Deut. xxxii. 35. he left the Altar, and taking the blessed Martyr's Head into his trembling Hands, he mounted the Ascent towards *Cradocus*. He feared not such a Blow as was given to the tender Virgin; on the same Account, for the Love of *Christ*, he would have bid it welcome. Faithful Servants of *God* dread nothing, Sin only excepted. Being come up to him, he said, *Thou wicked Man, who, without any Regard to Innocence or Beauty, hast massacred a Princely Virgin, no less nobly born than thyself! Nor dost thou repent, or seem sorry, as thou oughtest to do, for this horrid Sacrilege. I here beseech my Heavenly Lord, that, for an Example to others, he will please to execute his Divine Judgment against thee, who hast murdered his Spouse, troubled his People, violated his Sabbath, and besprinkled his holy House with Blood, which I consecrated to his Service.* As the Earth swallowed up rebellious and perverse *Corah*, Numb. xvi. so some affirm, that at St. *Beuno*'s last Words, *Cradocus* not only dropp'd down dead, but also that the Earth opened to give Passage to the luxurious Body to sink towards his monstrous Soul, or that the *Master* whom he had served, *the Devil*, carried it off; for it is certain, that the Carcase of the cruel Murderer never afterwards appeared.

The *Faithful* glorified *God* in his Justice, but could not curb their Grief. St. *Beuno* earnestly exhorted the Parents and People to turn from Lamentations, and to address the *Creator* of Souls, and *Raiser* up of dead Bodies, that as he had commanded back *Lazarus* to Life, rotting in his Monument, so, to his greater Honour and Glory, and for the Comfort of the sorrowful *Parents*, who had so generously dedicated this darling Child to his Service, he would graciously vouchsafe to restore her to Life. He then join'd the sacred Head to the pale Body, covering both with his Cloak, after which he offered up the holy *Sacrifice* of our Salvation.

After *Mass* was ended, he, lifting up his Hands to Heaven, made the following Prayer; O Lord Jesus Christ! for whose sake this holy Virgin contemn'd the World, and languished after Thee; by the tender Bowels of thy Mercy, Love, and Bounty, be graciously pleased to grant us the Effect of our Vows and Prayers humbly offered unto Thee. We are fully persuaded that this Godly Virgin, who lived holily, and died for Thee with great Constancy, is now highly exalted, and wants no more the Society of us mortal and miserable Creatures. Yet to manifest thy Omnipotence and Supreme Dominion which thou hast over Souls and Bodies, which are never dead to thy Power of reuniting them; as also to multiply the Merits of that Soul, whose Body lies here before us: We crave a second Life for her, to the end that after a long and plentiful Harvest, laden and enriched with  
new



new Merits, she may return unto Thee, her Eternal Spouse, and the Beloved of her Heart, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, rulest on Earth, and reignest in Heaven for ever and ever. The pious People, drowned in Tears, having, with Sighs and moving Sobs, answered devoutly, *Amen*, the Virgin arose, as newly awaked from Sleep. She wiped her Eyes and Face to clear away that glorious Dust, which had settled on her lovely Head when it tumbled towards her dear St. Beuno. The Decollation of St. *Wenefride* is celebrated on the 22d of June.<sup>h</sup>

Contemplate here (dear Reader) the Joy and Admiration which then transported all present at this wonderful Miracle. Tears burst out more plentifully, but flowing from a different Cause. They magnified and blessed the boundless Goodness of her Great God, every one resolving to rise with the *Saint* to a Newness of reforming their past Lives. One Particular in this surprizing Resuscitation is very remarkable, viz. When her Parents and others fixed their Eyes upon her Neck, they observed a *pure white Circle*, no larger than a small Thread, quite round it, denoting the Place where the Separation had been made which always after remained. From this the great Veneration of the People for her, changed her Name, which was *Brewa*,<sup>i</sup> into that of *Wenefride*. *Wen* in the old *British* Tongue signifies *White*, and other Letters were by an Alteration added to this Syllable, to render more agreeable the Sound of the new Name. In the many Apparitions after her Second Death, when she shewed herself to her devout Clients, they always took special notice of the aforesaid *white Circle*, which intimated to them the indelible Mark of her Spouse's Affection, for suffering that mortal Wound so courageously for his Sake.

Permit me here to break off for a while the Thread of this Discourse, by a short, but necessary, Digression, in order to obviate the Cavils of some modern incredulous Criticks, who seem now-a-days to entertain such strange Notions of these supernatural Works of Almighty God, that they believe nothing that suits not exactly with the fanciful Ideas of their own Brain. These Refiners will be apt not only to carp at what is here related concerning this Holy Virgin's Return to Life, but perhaps also turn to Ridicule what follows hereafter, of her sending Presents to St. Beuno by the Current of the miraculous Fountain, and several other wonderful Things contained in the following Pages. As it would be highly criminal to pretend to fathom the Wisdom of God by our shallow Capacities, or to confine his Omnipotence to the bounded Limits of the greatest Power upon Earth; so it would be Madness in us to believe every thing, without rational Grounds and sufficient Authority. But when we find such Instances of the Infinite Power and Goodness of Almighty God, as we have here in this History recorded <sup>k</sup> by learned and pious Witnesses, and handed down to Posterity

<sup>h</sup> One MS. says the 22d, but the *Cotton* one and that of Sir James Ware say the 24th. *Octavo Kalend. Jul.* So that she died upon the same Day both at *Holy-well* and *Guitherin*. And I wonder how the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, with his Clergy in *Convocation* assembled, came to appoint her Day to be observed on the 3d of *November*, which they did in 1398, more than 700 Years after her supposed Death. They also appointed *Nine Lessons* to be read on her Festival, which are yet to be seen in the *Breviary secundum usum Sarum*, and which (I mention it for his Credit) are almost Word for Word taken out of her Legend, written by the good Monk *Robert* of *Shrewsbury*.

<sup>i</sup> *Wen Brewa, Wen Vrewa, Wen Frewa, Wenefreda*, as *Lansanfraid*, comes from St. *Bride*, which is St. *Brigit*. The *Cotton* Life takes no notice of the Change of her Name, but says her Name was *Wenefrede* always, and, which is more, calls her *Candida Wenefreda*; and yet he who wrote it, seems to have been a *Welshman*. And the old *English* Legend of the Saints Lives says thus, *And ever as long as she lived after, there apiered about her Neck a Rednes round about, lyke to a rede Threde of Silk, in Signe and Token of her Martyrdome*, which quite overthrows our Criticism. It matters not much whether the Circle were *white* or *red*, provided there were any; and *Robert* assures us, that after her last Departure out of this World, she never shewed herself openly to any one, who did not also see this Circle, which I dare say is true.

<sup>k</sup> I refer the Reader to what has been said in the Observations before-going, and to the Chapter of Notes, that he may from thence determine who these learned and pious Witnesses were, that for 500 Years together have not so much as named the Name of *Wenefrede*; and how her Sanctity and Miracles can be said to be handed down to Posterity by an uninterrupted Tradition, when we can find no Mention made of her during that Space of Time. From the supposed Time of *Wenefrede* to *Robert* of *Salop* are 500 Years;



Posterity by an uninterrupted Tradition for several Ages together, and never question'd till these our Days; it is the Duty of every rational Man and pious *Christian*, rather to acknowledge the Goodness of God, who appeared wonderful in these his Works, than dispute his Power by cavilling at Facts, only because they seem to shock his foolish Imagination. To condescend to the Weakness of future Ages, Divine Providence seems to have taken particular Care we should not want undoubted Examples of this Nature, to facilitate our Belief. We know the Prophet *Elizeus* called back to Life the Son of the *Sunamite*, 4 Kings iv. St. *Peter* rais'd *Tabitha*, and St. *Paul* the young Man that fell from the Window, *Acts* ix. 20. Again, when the Sons of the Prophets were cutting down Wood on the Banks of the River *Jordan*, the Head of one of the Axes fell into the Water. The holy Prophet *Elizeus* cutting a Piece of Wood, in Form of a Handle to it, cast it into the River. The Iron immediately, contrary to its Nature, came from the Bottom, and joined the Wood, 4 Kings vi. If some of our modern Criticks, who pretend to more Wit than Religion, durst publish their profane Notions on this Occasion, as freely as they do in other miraculous Cases, not mentioned in holy Writ, they would ask, *By what* " Sympathy the " Iron was moved from the Bottom of the River, to seek for, and by what Art it " found out the Piece of Wood swimming on the Surface of the Waters? Whether " the Recovery of the lost Head of an Ax was a Matter of such Importance, that " God should think fit to employ his Omnipotence, in working so great a Miracle " to find it?" But to silence all such profane Reflections in those who pretend to *Christianity*, Almighty God has been pleas'd not only to work this, and the like Miracles, but provided they should be stamp'd with *Divine Truth*, and delivered down to all Ages to come, in the very Word of God itself.

Is it harder to believe, that a little light Bundle should float upon the Sea, and arrive safe in a Creek, near unto which St. *Beuno* then lived, without the least Damage, than that the Head of an Ax, a lumpish Piece of Iron, should swim upon the Surface of the Waters of the River *Jordan*, and join a Piece of Wood thrown in after it, in Form of a Handle? Without Doubt both Facts are wonderful, both Miracles.

I know

Years; and after *Robert*, no body, that we know of, says any thing of her for full 200 Years more. And is not this a very proper Case to talk of *Witnesses* in, and of *uninterrupted Tradition*? As to what follows concerning Miracles, I refer the Reader to the *Chapter* on that Head, reminding him now only of these few Things: That Miracles are not to be believed, purely upon the Credit of him who relates them, unless he be an inspired Writer, because all Men are subject to be deceived themselves, and may, if they will, incline to deceive others. Nor are all Miracles to be believed, merely because God *might* and *could* have wrought them, if he would; nor are all to be believed, because they are of the same Kind with those which God hath already wrought in the Scriptures. In a Word, when the Miracles that are said to have been wrought by the Saints in their Legends, have as full Authority and as good Proof as those we find in the Holy Scriptures, then they may be as certainly believed: Nay, when we are as sure that the Saints lived at such a Time, and wrought such and such Miracles, as we are that *Julius Cæsar* lived, and that *Josephus* wrote his History, we will believe the one as surely as the other. But would one think it possible for any Man in his Senses to compare the Certainty of *Julius Cæsar's* living, and of *Josephus's* writing his History, with the Certainty of *Wenefrede's* and *Beuno's* Life and Miracles? Surely the *Pilgrims* ought not to endure, without Complaint, so great a Scorn and Insult upon their Understanding. What is it makes it worth these Writers while to expose the Scriptures and our common Religion by such unequal and ridiculous Comparisons? We have no Distrust of God's Power to work what Miracles he pleases, and at what Time, and in what Manner; we only want Assurance of the Fact, from Writers of Authority and Credit, whose Skill, and Honesty, and Judgment, we may with good Reason depend upon. But must we presently believe, that every *first of May*, as long as *Beuno* lived, the Virgin came and brought a curious Vestment wrapped up in Woollen Cloth, and laid it in the midst of the *Well*, which was from thence carried down into the *River*, and thence into the *Dee*, and thence into the *Irish Seas*, and thence into the *Menai*, and from thence to *Clynog Vaur*, where *Beuno* lived, and received it safe and dry, as if it had been carried in a Ship; which is a Course of at least 50 Miles, and has as many Crooks, and Windings, and perverse Turnings, as it is possible for the Sea and Land to make, in such a Compass. Must we, I say, believe this annual Miracle upon the Credit of a Monk or two, delivering the same 500 Years after the Fact, because it was not impossible to God, and because the Scriptures tell us, that Iron swam at the Prophet *Elisba's* bidding? And yet this is the Reasoning of this Writer.



I know there is a very wide, and, as I may say, an infinite Disparity between *Miracles* registered in holy Scripture, and those recommended to Posterity by learned and unquestionable Authors: But when Facts are so fully attested by a Cloud of Witnesses, and delivered down to us by the universal Belief of all Ages, as in the Case before us, of our Saint's being raised to Life by the Prayers of St. *Beuno*, and of the Manner she sent Presents to him afterwards; it would be as unpardonable in a rational Man to refuse his Assent, as to deny that there ever was such a Person in the World as *Julius Cæsar*, or that whatever *Josephus* the Historian has left written of the *Jewish Wars*, was nothing but a meer Fable. Let then the Atheists rally, let the Incredulous mutter; all good *Christians* know, that the Son of God, who neither can nor will deceive, has made this infallible Promise to his Church, That he will be with her *to the End of the World*, Mat. xxviii. 20. and that they who believe in him, shall not only do the Works he did, but even *greater than those shall they do*, John xiv. 12. Can the Hand of God be shortened? or, Can his Goodness receive any Diminution? No, no; your Omnipotence, O Lord, is still the same, and of your Mercies there is no End.

Whatever this incredulous Age may think of this great Miracle of our Saint's Return to Life, it appear'd so evident to the *West-Britons*, and redounded so much to the Honour of God's Church, St. *Beuno*'s Sanctity, and the Power he had with his Creator, that many *Pagan People*, remaining in those Parts, came to hear the *holy Man*'s Instructions in the *Catholick Faith*, and to receive Baptism.

St. *Wenefride*, according to her former Practice, like *Mary* at the Feet of *Christ*, sat on a low Seat before him. She was never satiated with the heavenly *Manna*, which fell from his angelical Tongue. She counted as nothing what she had already done or suffer'd, and restless to be more strictly united to her beloved *Spouse*, she aspired to the Height of Perfection. Wherefore she most humbly begg'd upon her Knees to be solemnly veil'd, (according to the Custom of the primitive Ages) that by entering into a religious Course of Life, she might put *Hell* to greater Confusion, which had fiercely attempted to dishonour God and herself: But mostly, that she might pour forth her Soul in the Presence of her eternal *Spouse*, with a flaming and disengaged Heart, entirely his; and say, *Behold I have left all things, and followed thee*, St. Mat. xix. 27.

St. *Beuno*, with Tears of Joy, complied with this religious Request, and performed the Ceremony in a numerous Assembly. He knew to what a Degree of Sanctity the Spirit of God would raise her, for his own Glory, and the Improvement of others; therefore he spent whole Days in cultivating her Soul, in what regarded a *religious State*. She, as an apt Scholar, took in so fast the frequent Lessons, and put them in Practice so punctually, that it struck her Master into Admiration. He finding her so far advanced in an interior Life, that she was even able to direct and govern others in the way to Perfection, one Day he called for her *Parents*, and after the following Manner delivered unto them his Sentiments and Resolutions.

*As you* (said he) *have most liberally bestowed a Church and House for the Service of God, and for the Help and Benefit of the Faithful, so his Divine Majesty has more than sufficiently requited your Charity, by conferring on you spiritual Favours, but more especially on your Child, whom, for the Time to come, you may follow as a safe Guide, in our blessed Redeemer's Service. I am call'd on by Heaven to another Place; and I leave you to the Grace and Goodness of God, and to the rare Example of your Daughter.* Then turning to St. *Wenefride*, he said, *Our Lord, dear Child, has appointed you to succeed in my Labours. March on in the Way of Virtue, as I have taught you, and guide others on the Road to Eternal Life. Gather in this very Place, for your heavenly Spouse, many pure and devout Virgins; but know withal, that here you shall not end your Days; for after the Term of seven Years, spent by you in Prayer and Au-*



*sterities, for your own Merits, and Edification of others, our gracious Lord will summon you to another Place, that Strangers may be instructed by you, and come to the true Knowledge and Service of him, for whose Sake you fell a Victim of Purity.*

When the *Antients* of *Ephesus* had heard St. Paul declare unto them, that they should see no more his Face, Acts xx. 25. they fell upon his Neck, and there was great Weeping. In like Manner, when St. *Wenefride* was acquainted by her admired Master, that she should not see him any more in this World, a lawful Grief seem'd to overwhelm her. To comfort her in such deep Affliction, St. *Beuno* took her by the Hand, and led her to the Chrystalline Fountain, the Place of her Martyrdom; where they sitting together on a Stone, bearing to this Day the Name of St. *Beuno's* Stone, and which lieth now in the outward Well; You see (said he) the Monument here of your Sufferings. Behold also the Stones, as tinctur'd with your Blood, which was shed for the Glory of your heavenly Spouse. Be you therefore attentive, and mindful of what I do foretel you, concerning three special Favours, whereby your glorious Spouse Jesus Christ will hereafter honour yourself, and by your Prayers benefit others. The First is, That these bloody Spots shall never be washed off from the said Stones, but ever remain, as triumphant Signs of your Blood, spilt in Defence of your Chastity. The Second is, That any Person who shall devoutly ask Temporal Blessings, or Freedom from Spiritual or Corporal Distresses, to be obtained by your Merits and Intercession, the same shall compass his Request, if it be to the Honour and Glory of God, by paying their Devotions three times at this Well. If what he petitions for, be not for the Advantage of his Soul, and therefore is not granted; at his Death, by your Prayers, he shall reap more ample Fruit, and in the next World everlasting Blessings. The Third, That after my Departure into a more remote Part of this Island, God will give me a Cell near unto the Sea-Shore; so that whenever you send any Letters or Tokens to me, as I intreat you to do at least once every Year, only cast them into the Stream of this Fountain, and they will come safe unto me. Which Wonders will be gloriously divulged of you, to the End of the World.

He then conducted her back to the Church; where he added, Behold this Church, and Buildings round it, which have been rais'd by the Munificence of your Parents; these I leave unto you, to be converted into a Monastery of chaste and holy Virgins, who moved by your pious Instructions and exemplary Life, may put in Practice those divine Lessons, which I have often delivered unto you; that is, the Contempt of the World, and an entire Abnegation of themselves: which are the Foundation of religious Perfection. Strive therefore, dear Child, in all things, to exhibit yourself as a lively Pattern of Virtue. As to my poor self, I will go whither the Spirit of God shall direct me, and shall ever retain in my Heart and Soul, a most fatherly and loving Memory of you.

To experience the racking Effects of a rational Sorrow, is nothing derogatory to solid Virtue. The Holy of Holies not only groan'd, but wept at the Tomb of *Lazarus*, St. John xi. 35. and he shed Tears upon *Jerusalem*, St. Luke xix. 41. for the future Calamities of that obstinate City, which would not know the Time of its Visitation. The Royal Prophet, a Man according to God's own Heart, upon taking his last Farewel of his beloved *Jonathas*, they wept together, but David more, 1 Reg. xx. 41. It must not then seem strange, that the tender Heart of this doleful Virgin was ready to split asunder with Grief, at the last Adieu, in this World. The more he attempted to sweeten this bitter Separation, his charming Words caused her swelling Sorrow to float higher; insomuch, that when she saw him, with his Staff in his Hand, ready to depart, she rated the approaching Loss as the heaviest Cross upon Earth, and could not forbear expressing thus herself unto him; Now, holy Father, I am to be left alone, as a poor Orphan Child without a Nurse, or as a silly Sheep amongst ravenous Wolves, without a Pastor to defend me. I was always safe with you, always joyful in your Presence, always instructed by your Exhortations, and edified by your Example.

These



These Words, attended with flowing Tears, so much oppress'd St. *Beuno's* Heart, that not being able to utter any Answer, he blessed her with his Hand, and hasten'd his Pace in the beginning of his Journey.

Nothing now could comfort her, save only the fresh Remembrance of all his pious Instructions, and an earnest Desire of executing obediently his Commands. Accordingly, in a short Time, she associated to herself many noble and devout *Virgins*, who observed such Rules as she establish'd for them. She order'd nothing but what first she practis'd herself; and Miracles were not wanting to increase her Authority, and the Opinion of her Sanctity. Their Love and Respect towards her, caused each of them to contend who should be most forward in the Imitation of her rare Perfections. They nauseated fordid Pleasures, they undervalued Wealth and Honours, and they seem'd to be Inhabitants of a Terrestrial *Paradise*, in loving and serving their heavenly *Spouse*, the *Son of God*. She governed her Subjects with endearing Commands, so that they obey'd with equal Merit and Content. She eas'd them in their Difficulties and Temptations, insomuch that they observing her rigid Mortification, her angelical Purity, and knowing the strict Union she had with *God* in Prayer, whatever she declared unto them, was received as Oracles from Heaven.

The spreading Fame of St. *Wenefride* was wonderfully dilated by miraculous Cures of diseased Persons. They were frequent and apparent, and divulged through other Parts of *Wales*. Many flocked from distant Places to hear her Discourse, and to receive Instructions; whom she sent away with flaming Hearts, and ardent Desires to be faithful and fervent in the Service of their *God*. They regretted a Return to their respective Habitations; and as the *Queen of Saba* stood astonish'd at *Solomon's* singular Wisdom, so these admiring Strangers magnified the constant Happiness of the *Virgins* she govern'd, and blessed those who *always stood before her*, 3 Reg. x. 8. they having such a secure *Mistress*, and so tender a *Mother*.

*Gratitude* for received Favours is not only a moral Virtue, but the eternal Employ of *Cherubins* and *Seraphims*, who are now adoring, and offering never-ending Thanks to the infinite Goodness of their Omnipotent *Creator*, who commanded them out of the Chaos of Nothing. St. *Wenefride* had a most grateful Soul; she honour'd St. *Beuno* as an eminent Servant of *God*; she loved him as a *Father*; she respected him as a *Master*; and could never sufficiently acknowledge her Duty to her greatest *Benefactor*, after him who made her. St. *Beuno* delivered to her the first Rudiments of Perfection; he incited her to embrace a *religious* State; he obtained for her by his Prayers a second Life, and polish'd her Interior, that she was amiable in the Sight of *God* and Men. To make some small Return, she sent him every Year a Token, after the Manner he had prescribed. In the beginning of *May*,<sup>1</sup> almost a Year after his Departure, with the Help of her religious *Sisters*, she finish'd a curious embroidered *Vestment*,<sup>m</sup> and wrapping the same in a Woollen Cloth, she went down with her

*Religious,*

<sup>1</sup> The *Cotton-Life* says this *Present* was sent upon every *Eve* of St. *John Baptist*; and so it might come to *Beuno* upon that very Day, on which her own Head, as well as St. *John's*, was cut off.

<sup>m</sup> This Editor translates *Casula* by *Vestment*, tho' it properly signify a *Chasuble*, which is somewhat for the Priest's use, in celebrating Divine Service: But I incline to think it was rather an ordinary Vestment, or a travelling Coat, for daily use, because the *Cotton-Life* says, that wherever *Beuno* went with this *Casula*, he was never wet in it, (that Power it seems it was indued withal) and from thence was called *Beuno Casulseck*, or *Beuno-drycoat*. Now I think so great a Saint as *Beuno* would never go abroad in any of the holy Habits, that were proper to the Priest whilst he was officiating; and moreover, the coming of the Vestment dry, after such a Voyage, was not so proper to denominate the Saint *Casulseck*, as its keeping him dry when he was going about his religious Business in rainy Weather would be. And tho' this be adding Miracle to Miracle, yet it is no great matter, when compared with what the Monk *Jocelinus* tells us of good St. *Kentigern*, in the 35th Chapter of his Life, namely, that whenever he went abroad, whether in Rain, or Hail, or Snow, there was not a Drop that fell upon him, but discharged itself all around, and left him dry; nay those who went along with him did also escape these Inconveniencies, so favoured of *God* was this great Saint. And lest the Reader should incline a little to disbelieve this Account, the Author bids him remember, that the *Israelites* travelled forty Years, and their Raiment waxed not old; and



Religious, and others, to the Well Side, and casting the Bundle into the Water, she said, *Holy Father, according to your Command, and my Promise, I send you this small Token of my Love.* To the great Astonishment of numerous Beholders, it passed down the Stream into the River, then into the Sea, and it landed near the Monastery where St. Beuno then dwelt, many Miles distant from the *holy Fountain*.

The *holy Man* was then walking on the Sea Shore, and wondered what that Bundle should be; but opening it, he remembered the Charge he had given to St. *Wenefride*, and that, as he had foretold, it came miraculously to him, without the least Sign of Wet or Moisture. This *Vestment* he preserved with great Care in the Church, for the Celebration of holy *Mafs*. He likewise received fresher Lights of her present and future Sanctity; how much *Almighty God* would be honoured by her, not only at *Finbon*, but in other Places whither Divine Providence should direct her to go. The *Virgin* never intermitted to send him a yearly Present, till his most happy Death was reveal'd unto her, and the glorious Reward he was crowned with in Heaven.

This last Passage may appear to incredulous Drolls the most surprizing of all others in the History of St. *Wenefride's* Life; therefore Divine Providence thought fit to authenticate the Memory of it to this very Day, and after this Manner. In *Carnarvonshire*, eight Miles distant from the Town of *Carnarvon*, there is a little Creek where the Sea runs up, called in *Welsh* *Porth y Caffeg*, (corruptedly, as I could instance in other Appellations) for *Porth y Cassul*, or the *Port of the Vestment*. Here the first Present of our Saint miraculously landed; and the Place retains the Name to this Day. Near unto this Inlet stands a large Parish Church called *Clynnog*, in which St. *Beuno* was buried, his first founded Monastery being there. His Tomb is yet extant, and is had in great Veneration by the Inhabitants. The History of St. *Wenefride's* Life was curiously represented in the Glass Windows of *Clynnog* Church, but has been so defaced, that little now appears. What can be more persuasive to obtain Credit to this Miracle, than so antient and so certain a Tradition, even to those who use their utmost Efforts to destroy the Memory of Miracles! The *Port of the Vestment* solves the Objection from the Year 660 to this of 1712. As Apostolical Tradition is the unwritten Word of God, and by it we receive the holy Scriptures, and the

sacred

and that nothing was impossible with God; which shews what excellent use the Monks are apt to make of Scripture Examples. The *Cotton-Life* says, this Bundle that was sent to *Beuno*, was not thrown into the *Well*, but laid upon a *Stone* in the *Well*; which *Stone* failed with its Freight, till it came to *Beuno's* Cell, and there delivered it dry into his Hands. And why not, since nothing is impossible with God, and since we are sure that Iron swam, and sure that the Hand of the Lord is not shortened? But as sure as all these things are, there is another full as sure as this, that *Monks can invent*.

<sup>a</sup> *Porth y Caffeg*. The Editor is very much exalted, at this lucky Incident, that there is still a Creek in *Carnarvonshire*, that is called *Porth y Caffeg*, which should be *Porth y Cassul*, or the *Port of the Vestment*; and thinks it a full Proof of the above-told Story of the Vestment's yearly Voyage from *Holy-well* to *Beuno's* Monastery at *Clynog Vawr*; and says that the *Port of the Vestment* solves the Objection from the Year 660 to 1712. By this it appears, that he takes three things for granted; 1. That there is such a Creek as *Porth y Caffeg*; 2. That this is *Porth y Cassul*; and, 3. That this has been so called from 660 to 1712, i. e. for 1052 Years. To the *First* I say, there is no such Name in any of our Maps; nor is the Place known by that Name to the Inhabitants thereabouts, as I can learn upon Enquiry. There is such a Place in *Monmouthshire*, called now *Parcaffeg*, but in the *Monasticon* 'tis called *Porthcaffeg*. To the *Second* I say, that *Porth y Caffeg* is as likely to be the Name as *Porth y Cassul*, altho' such Changes are very easy and natural. But I demurr to the *Third* Conclusion altogether; for if this silly Story should be but of the same Date with *Prior Robert's* Legend of *Wenefrede*, yet might the Place where this famous Vestment was said to land every Year, be called, by the poor ignorant common People, *Porth y Cassul*, without rising to such a Height of Time backwards as *Beuno's* reputed Age is. But after all, there is no Mention of *Port Cassul*, or any *Port* at all by *Robert*, tho' he be tediously particular in describing the sending, sailing, and arriving of this *Woollen Vessel*, with its rich Freight. The *Cotton-Life* calls it *Port-Sachlem*, with Reference, in all Likelihood, to the *Sack* or *Bag*, in which this precious Coat was wrapped up, it being observable that that Word *Sac* signifies the same thing in abundance of Languages. The Life of *Beuno* also is defective in this Point, there being no Mention made therein, of the wonderful Conveyance of this yearly Present. But since the Editor says, That the *uninterrupted Tradition from Father to Son, for so many Centuries, is a clearer Attestation of Fact, than if it had been recorded in written History*, it must e'en pass; for I have nothing to say to things that are to be believed, whether they be written, or whether they be not written: This solves all Objections indeed.



sacred Interpretation and true Sense of them, as what regards *Infant-Baptism*, &c. let it be lawful for me to say, that as to *Human Faith*, uninterrupted *Tradition* from Father to Son for so many Centuries, is a clearer Attestation of *Fact*, than if it had been recorded in written History.

After St. *Beuno*'s Decease, St. *Wenefride* began to feel in her Soul clear Illustrations and strong Impulses for removing from the Monastery where she was. She had the Comfort to see her *Religious* so well grounded in Perfection, that her Presence was not necessary; wherefore in the End of the seventh Year of her Government, (as the Saint had foretold her) she took leave of her spiritual Children, and of her loving Parents. 'Tis easily imagin'd, that as the *Virgin Martyr* was under a severe Trial at the Departure of St. *Beuno*, whom she call'd her *Father*; in like manner these noble religious Virgins had heavy Hearts and flowing Eyes, when they understood that their dearest *Mother* was fully resolv'd to leave them. To compose and quiet them, she declar'd that *it was the Will of God*, and as they had submitted unto her, they ought to shew undisturbed Obedience to their *heavenly Spouse*; that all things ought to be welcome, coming from his fatherly Hand, and appointed them by infinite Wisdom. So, having compleated necessary Orders, she embraced each of the *Sisters*, and chose one of them for a Companion in her Journey. Before her Departure, she went down to visit the Place of her *Martyrdom*; where falling upon her Knees in fervent Prayer, she humbly besought the *Creator* of Heaven and Earth to direct her in this new *Pilgrimage*, and likewise to *increase* his *Blessings on such*, who in a devout Manner should visit that *Well*, where for his Honour she had suffer'd the Loss of her Life. The many Miracles in subsequent Ages gave clear Testimony, that her charitable Petition had the gracious Assent of *him*, who is the Bestower of all good Gifts.

St. *Wenefride* having recommended to God her Monastery of *Finbon*, her Parents, and her Friends, ° Divine Providence directed her to the Cell of blessed *Deifer*, eight Miles distant from the *Holy Well*. This *Recluse* was much in *God's* Favour; and *Robert*, Prior of *Shrewsbury*, recounts of him several evident Miracles, which for

Brevity

° The Editor of this Life grows somewhat scrupulous in this Part of the Work, dares not express himself so freely as he should, nor do that Justice to the Saint of *Bodvarry*, that *Robert* and the *Jesuit J. F.* have done. He talks of *Providence directing Wenefrede*; whereas the original Work says, That having passed the whole Night in Prayer and Watching, she heard a Voice from Heaven, that said distinctly to her, 'Take thee only one Maid for thy Companion, and go to blessed *Deifer*, who lives in a Place that is called *Bodvarry*, and he shall tell thee what thou art to do, and whither thou must go: For the Man was great in the Sight of God, and walked in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless; and of him it is said, that he was mighty in working Miracles, and that among the rest, he caused a *Well* to rise out of the Earth, and stretching out his Hands over it, he prayed to God, that whatever sick Person should wash therein, he might return home safe and sound; which many People have experienced to their great Comfort, and had their Healths restored by it.

I confess, that when I read Monkish Relations, I am evermore suspicious of the *Deifer's* and the *Deicola's*; but in this Relation I take him for as true a Saint as *Wenefrede* herself, and know not why his Story should be smothered, or his *Well* neglected. I will not however trouble the Reader with the Miracles said by *Robert* to be done by him; but observe, that altho' *Wenefrede* was inspired by God to go to *Deifer*, yet when she came thither, he knew nothing of the Matter; but told her that he would that Night consult with God, by Prayer, who might perchance reveal that Matter to him: And so it came to pass, for towards the Morning, a Voice from Heaven directed him to tell the blessed Virgin, that she must needs repair to *Henllan*, where one *Saturnus* should inform her what she was to do, and to what farther Place she was to go. *Saturnus* was, it seems, better provided for her Reception, and having been instructed of God before-hand, told her (but not before they had passed the whole Night in Prayer and holy Conferences) that she must next resort to one *Elerius*, who was a holy Man, and lived at a Place called *Gwitheryn*, where she should be instructed fully in the Will of God. What excellent Work is here, for Inspiration, and Divine Impulses! Warned of God to go from *Holy-well* to *Bodvarry*! warned of God to go from thence to *Henllan*! warned of God to go from *Henllan* to *Guitherine*! a Course, as I guess, of about 16 Miles in Compas. *Wenefrede* inspired to go to *Deifer*; *Deifer*, at length, inspired to send her to *Saturnus*; and good *Saturnus* inspired to send her forwards to *Elerius*; and *Elerius*, at last, inspired to tell her she must be first a Nun, and then, in God's good Time, an Abbess at *Guitherine*! I do not so much as dispute whether *Deifer*, *Saturnus*, and *Elerius*, be right old *British* Names or not, but stand amazed that Pilgrims should be taught to think that the blessed Spirit is thus employed.



Brevity are here omitted, because my sole Intention is to set forth the Merits of our glorious *Patronefs of Wales*. The holy Man told her, that God had not made any thing known unto him as to her Journey; *but have Patience* (said he) *this Night, and I will inquire after his blessed Pleasure*. St. Deifer spending the Night in Prayer, according to his Custom, heard a Voice towards Morning, which said, *Tell my dear Virgin Daughter Wenefride, that ſhe repair forthwith to the Village Henthlant, where the venerable Saturnus will fully inſtruct her as to the Place of her Abode during Life*. Deifer acquainted her with his Commiſſion, and likewise aſſur'd her, that this *holy Neighbour* (ſo he call'd him) would be enabled from Heaven not only to ſatisfy her where to fix, but likewise he would inform her of other things relating to herſelf. After that, he directed her in the Way to St. Saturnus.

It pleaſed Almighty God to honour the Virgin's Progreſs by revealing the ſame to ſeveral Saints, and the Occaſion of her Journey. Amongſt the reſt was St. Saturnus, who gave her a charitable Reception at *Henthlant*. Great Part of that Night they ſpent together in Prayer and holy Conferences; and to her great Conſolation he entertained her with many ſpiritual Lectures. He acquainted her in the Morning, that there was a Place not far off, call'd *Witheriac*, (now vulgarly *Guitherin*) which was enriched with precious Reliques of many glorious Saints, who had lived and died there; and on this Account it was highly revered by devout People. *This Place* (ſaid he) *is appointed you by Divine Providence for your Temporal Sojourning upon Earth: You'll find there a holy Abbot, by Name Elerius, who is of ſo great Mortification, and of ſo great Union with God in Prayer, that he is entirely dead to the World. I am ordered to ſend you to this Man, and farther to let you know, that you'll experience under his Conduct a Celeſtial Tranquillity of Mind. You'll likewise find there a Monastery of chaſte Virgins, who have been train'd up from their very Infancy in ſolid Virtue. You are deſtin'd by Heaven to improve them more in Perfection by your Example and Inſtructions. In Proceſs of Time theſe Religious will ſubmit themſelves unto you, as to a Mother and Abbeſs, who is ſent providentially unto them by their heavenly Spouſe*.

St. Wenefride was transported with Joy, hearing this agreeable Relation of her Happineſs ſo near at hand. She moſt humbly begged his Bleſſing and Directions how to finiſh her Journey. The holy Man, out of Reſpect and Reverence, accompanied her himſelf part of the Way. At parting he gave her his Bleſſing, and ordered his Deacon to conduct her to St. Elerius. 'Twas no ſmall Comfort to her that ſhe was travelling towards a *Monastery* of pure *Virgins*, and there to enjoy their Angelical Converſation.

*Guitherin* is now a Village, whatever it was in former Times, in *Denbighſhire*, near the River *Cluide*, which ſeparates this County from that of *Flint*. St. Elerius had here his Monastery in a Vale call'd *Vallis Clutina*, where ſeveral Religious Perſons of both Sexes embraced his Inſtitute, and followed his Example.

The holy Abbot had a Revelation of her Coming, and of her diſtinguiſhing Merits; therefore to honour her, he met her at ſome Diſtance, and led her to the Church. After they had pray'd a while together, he took her aſide from the *Deacon* and her Companion, telling her, that he was no Stranger to that heroical Act of ſuffering a violent Death to preſerve her Virginitv; that the miraculous Fountain was an evident Teſtimony of it; and that he would chearfully aſſiſt her in the Deſigns of his *Divine Majeſty* intended by this her Journey. The *Virgin* reply'd, *That as to herſelf, ſhe had only this to offer, That as ſhe had been guided by God's holy Spirit to find him out, ſo in the future Courſe of her Life ſhe would be an obedient Child in hearing and obſerving his Directions*.

The holy Abbot was extreamly edify'd at this humble and modeſt Answer. He told her, That if ſhe pleaſed, they would ſpend that Night in Prayer, for greater Security in this important Affair. This they did; and he having received clearer Lights from Heaven, was replenish'd with incredible Joy, and told her in the Morning,



ing, That *Almighty God* would not be wanting to increase his Fatherly Love towards her. Without saying more, he led her out of the Church to the Monastery which was under his Government, and he spoke thus to the Religious *Virgins*.

*Rejoice, dear Children of God, for that it hath pleased your Heavenly Spouse to send a New Star of wonderful Brightness to shine amongst you. He has provided you such a Companion as will enrich your Souls with the Treasure of Religious Perfection, by the Pattern she'll set before you. This is the renowned Virgin Wenefride, who, as you have heard, suffered a glorious Death in Defence of her Chastity. This is she whose Triumphs are recounted in Churches, and whose Trophies illustrate the Province where she lived. Rejoice therefore, because she is come to remain and end her Days amongst you. Happy is her Arrival! Preserve carefully this inestimable Treasure. Mark and imitate the Example she'll shew you, and give Attention to the spiritual Documents she'll deliver, because for this Christ has sent her.* Having uttered this Speech to the Religious in general, he address'd the venerable *Abbess Theonia* with these few Words: *To you, dear Mother, after a more special manner I recommend a respectful Entertainment of this sacred Spouse of Christ, who by directing her hither has signally regarded and regaled your Family.* After this he withdrew, leaving St. *Wenefride* amongst them blushing, and as it were sinking under the Burthen of her own Praises.

Not only *Abbess Theonia*,<sup>p</sup> who was a very holy Woman, but St. *Elerius* also held frequently private Conferences with St. *Wenefride*; and discoursing of heavenly Mysteries and virtuous Practices, they discovered her to be so clearly illuminated in the first, and so solidly grounded in the second, that both of them admired the rich Treasury of her Soul. When the *Abbot* return'd to his *Monks*, who lived not far off in austere Discipline, 'twas his Custom to magnify the Merits of this *Stranger*, and seem'd not able to express what was due unto her.

At length the Fame of her Sanctity was so much divulged, that numerous Crowds of all Callings flocked to *Guitherin* to behold a noble courageous Creature, who to secure her Virginity had suffered the Loss of her Head, and who after Death, to the greater Glory of her *Spouse*, by a holy Man's Prayer, had returned to Life. They importuned her to shew the *pure white Circle* round her Neck, which she industriously declined, till at the Request of her *Sisters* she yielded to their pious Desire, lest she should seem to affect *Humility*. The glorious Scar forced Tears of Compunction from their Eyes, by reflecting how heroically and with what Fortitude she received the mortal Wound from the Sword of cruel *Cradocus*, rather than once to offend her *God*; and how often they had shewed their Weakness in complying with the first Suggestions of the Infernal Enemy, and shameful Proposals of a wicked Companion.

St. *Elerius* going one Day to the Monastery to visit the living *Martyr*, and to confer with her in spiritual Matters, they entered occasionally on the Subject of the *Happiness of dying well*. He told her, That he often took Complacency in the Thoughts of having her near him when he lay on his Death-Bed, and that after his Departure her Prayers would afford him Relief for the Repose of his Soul. No, *Father*, (said she Prophetically) *Christ hath appointed otherwise. You shall live to bury our dear Mother Theonia, and a few Years after to bury me: Then some Time being expired, yourself shall pass from this transitory World, and go to Him, of whose Kingdom there is no End.* All this came to pass as the *Saint* foretold.

Soon after this Prediction, *Theonia* was visited with her final Sickness, and finding herself near her End, she received from *Elerius's* Hands the Blessed Sacrament, as her *Viaticum* to conduct her safely towards Heaven. The Religious were on their Knees round her Bed, lamenting bitterly the foreseen Loss, whom she comforted after this manner:

<sup>p</sup> The Editor conceals from his devout Pilgrims, that the *Abbess Theonia* (another *Welsh* Name to be sure) was the true and natural Mother of *Elerius* (as *Robert* affirms more than once) not out of Respect, I fear, to undefiled Marriage.



manner : *Children ! Tears are not to flow for Friends, or for ourselves, unless some Evil hath happened, or Misfortune. Our present Case hath no such Countenance : As to myself, I am hastening to my Heavenly Spouse, (as I hope) who calls me to Him. As to you, Blessed Wenefride, a more holy Mother, will succeed me, who by Words and Works will improve you in Perfection. Follow her Steps, and you will not wander nor go astray.* Then being spent, she breathed out her pure and precious Soul. Her *Obsequies* being solemnly and christianly performed by St. *Elerius*, he appointed St. *Wenefride* Abbess, to govern the *Monastery*. Her profound Humility dissuaded her from undertaking the Charge, but the Obedience she had promised the holy *Abbot*, and the repeated Petitions of the *Sisters*, notwithstanding natural Reluctancy, wrought her at last into Compliance.

The nice Art of governing *many*, whose Genius's and Constitutions are as differing as the Features of their Faces, is attended with such vast Difficulties, that *Solomon* being favoured and honoured by the *Almighty* with that unlimited Offer, *Ask what thou wilt, that I may give it thee*, 3 Reg. iii. 5. the considering *King* petitioned for what was most necessary to rule the numerous *Israelites* ; he desired not Riches or Glory, but *Wisdom*, a *docible Heart*. St. *Wenefride* was naturally prudent, and her *Spouse* bestowed upon her a more than ordinary Talent of Governing ; so that wish'd-for Success answered Expectation. He blessed *that Head* with supernatural Wisdom, which had been sacrificed to his Honour. She made use of the same Maxims and Methods at *Guitherin*, as before she had done at *Finbon*. Her Commands were intimated with such Affability and Discretion, that they appeared to her Subjects so many Intreaties. She went constantly before the rest in the most painful Duties of the *Monastery* ; and although the Dignity of her Office required due Distance, she not only conversed with her *Sisters* as with Equals, but also look'd upon herself as the least deserving in the whole *Community*. She had the true Spirit of Poverty, and was so much averse to Superfluities, that she would scarce admit of Necessaries. She was most rigid in Abstinence, and *Patience* had taken such absolute Possession of her Heart, that not the least Entrance was allowed to Anger and other inordinate Passions. Her Prayer was continual, when not interrupted by Duties of Charity and necessary Sleep. She was frequently favoured with *Raptures* and *Extasies*. She never dropped any Word tending to her own Commendation, and was sensibly afflicted when others mentioned any thing in her Praise.

The Blessed *Martyr* inculcated daily to her *Sisters* to have always before their Eyes the grand Example of their dear *Redeemer*, and to copy out such Virtues as he exercised, to instruct as well as to save them : That they ought to study a pure Intention in all their Actions, to serve *God* for his own sake. She earnestly recommended Fortitude and Perseverance, as strong Armour to overcome all Sorts of Temptations : That they ought not to be dismay'd in these spiritual Conflicts, for by the Conquest they would obtain the Crown. *Prayer* (she said) when well performed, did dilate their Souls, and prepared an Entrance to Divine Grace, which enabled them to undertake noble Actions for their *God*. 'Tis needless to mention her Angelical Purity ; the flowing *Fountain* seems to denote, that she would have parted with Streams of Blood, rather than to have consented to one single Thought to the Prejudice of her consecrated Virginity.

It was observed, that when she exhorted her *Religious*, a Depth of Heavenly Wisdom appeared in her Words, which inflamed her Hearers with the Love of *Jesus*. She was favoured with a special Gift of discovering Temptations, and of applying proper Remedies to defeat the Enemy. Not only the *Laity*, but even *Religious Men* and *Prelates*, found great Advantage by conferring with her. Many resorted to *Guitherin* from all Parts of the Province. What is yet more, notorious *Thieves* and inveterate



inveterate Malefactors were reclaimed from their evil Courses by her powerful Advice and irresistible Remonstrances.

Almighty GOD was pleased to declare by Signs and Miracles how much St. *Wenefride* was in his Divine Favour. Scarce any Day passed, wherein, by sudden Cures of desperate Distempers, she did not comfort drooping and desponding *Patients*: Her *Monastery* resembled a common Refuge of the Distressed, and she was like a tender *Mother* to the Unfortunate. Her heroical Virtues were the universal Subject of Discourse in private Families, and the Fame of her Miracles was heard from the Pulpits in Churches. St. *Elerius*, who was best acquainted with her Merits, declared openly, That *Providence* had directed her to *Guitherin*, to honour and benefit them all: But from human Applause, which was abhorr'd by her to the last Degree, she was invited by a Revelation to the immortal Glory of *Angels*.

The *Saint* being thus forewarned of her long wished-for Departure, the welcome News, for whole Days and Nights, threw her into *Extasies* of Joy. She had made it her Study to forget, as much as possible, what she had done or suffered for her dear Lord; and therefore, as one who is to undertake a long Journey, she made necessary Provisions, as if nothing had been performed during the Course of her holy Life. She redoubled her Fasts and other Austerities; she fatigued herself in the painful Exercises of continual Charity towards her *Sisters* and others. Notwithstanding her Angelical Interior, and the uninterrupted Union with her Divine Spouse, she vilified herself as one not worthy of his Presence. That she might not surprize the Community, by her leaving them in a short Sickness, <sup>a</sup> she imparted first to St. *Elerius* the Summons she had received from her Redeemer, and the same afterwards to her dear *Sisters*, whose Sorrow was little inferior to those Transports of Jubilee she was absorbed in, by the certain Assurance of passing speedily to her Lord and Master. They wept, they mourned, but she thus comforted them.

*Weep not, dear Children, but conform your Wills to your Creator's Pleasure. Doubt not but that in Heaven (whither through the Mercies of God I am going) I shall be more serviceable to you by my Prayers, than here on Earth by my Presence. For that Land of Promise is not a Place of Ignorance, but of clear Knowledge, where the Blessed understand the Wants of their Friends on Earth; and they being united in the Fountain-Head of infinite Charity, they are powerful and ready to procure speedy Helps to succour them. This I promise to do for you, my dear Children, after that Christ shall have taken me into his Kingdom. You must not be contristated like those who have no Hope. To wicked Worldlings, who by their sinful Lives dread the Sight of a terrible Judge, Death appears like a cruel Executioner, to drag them to a formidable Tribunal; but to innocent and holy Souls Death is entertained as a welcome Guest; he finds them ready to embrace him with Joy: They are like to Men expecting their Lord when he returns from the Marriage, St. Luke xii. 36. and are ready to go with him, as through God's Mercy, I hope that I am prepared at present for the heavenly Journey, to enter into the Joys of my Lord.*

Her concluding Sickness took its beginning from frequent and violent Convulsions, which she endured with unparallel'd Patience. The lively Hopes of seeing her heavenly Spouse sweeten'd all her acute Pains; yet knowing that the crafty Tempter is more furious in the decisive Conflict, she earnestly and often besought our Lord, that he would not permit the infernal Enemy to be frightful unto her in her last Agony. She exhorted all who came to visit her, to make early Preparations against that dreadful Hour, on which depended eternal Happiness, or never-ending Misery.

In

<sup>a</sup> Robert says, that *Elerius* heard of it only by Report and Chance, after she had acquainted her Nuns with it, and comforted them concerning it: But the Editor, having made *Elerius* to be her Confessor, durst not venture her telling any thing of Importance to any one before she had acquainted him with it; which is of good Use for those who trade in such Wares, and a right Intimation to devout Pilgrims.



In the beginning of *November*, finding her Strength exhausted, and that her Dissolution was near at hand, she called for the *Saint* her Confessor, and was by him fortified with the *Holy Sacrament* of the Church. Beholding the *Religious* in Tears upon their Knees, she said, *Dear Children, rather congratulate with me, than grieve so much at my approaching Happiness. I hope ere long to enjoy him in Heaven whom I have ardently loved upon Earth. Preserve inviolably the Promise you have made him: Undervalue the base and sordid Pleasures of this transitory World; reflect that your Bodies, although beautiful and in their Prime, are no other than loathsome Prisons, which detain your immortal Souls in close Confinement. Take great heed not to defile them, and never forget this important Lesson, that the heavenly Comfort and Joy which pure Souls experience on their Death-Bed, recompences abundantly all worldly Riches, Pleasures, and Honours which they have despised and abandoned for the Service and Love of Jesus Christ.*

The *Saint*, as it were, knowing the very Minute of her Departure, took her last Leave and Blessing of holy *Elerius*, hoping that they would meet soon in Heaven, without any Fear of a future Separation. She humbly requested that her Body might be buried near unto *Theonia's*, her holy Mother; then in a pure Act of intense Love of God, on the 3d of *November*, she breathed out her thrice happy Soul into her blessed Redeemer's Hands.

*Elerius* observing that she had expired, as the *Religious* also did, who were kneeling near her Bed, the many deep Sighs published their Loss. The holy Abbot found himself obliged to suppress his own Grief, that he might more effectually comfort them, by declaring that she was only removed to Heaven before them, and that they ought to prepare to follow after her: That she was united gloriously to her God, and by her Prayers would powerfully assist them. Her Body was very little alter'd in the Comeliness of it by her Death; and as she had desir'd, it was solemnly interr'd near *Theonia's*, and many other *Saints* buried before her in that Place: Amongst the rest were *Cheb* and *Sennan*,<sup>r</sup> the one lying at her Head, and the other by her Side. Both these were renowned for Sanctity and Miracles, and had Churches rais'd to their Memories. Yet altho' these two, and many other *Saints* Bodies, which had been committed to that holy Ground, drew thither devout People; yet the Place was mostly revered and honoured for St. *Wenefride's* Sepulchre, which was afterwards favoured by a Train of evident Miracles. Not long after St. *Elerius*, by a happy Death, finished his Course, and went to receive the eternal Reward of his Apostolical Labours. His Body was interred in a Church erected to his Name and Memory, where it pleased Almighty God to work miraculous Cures, in Testimony of his Sanctity on Earth, and Power by his Prayers in Heaven.

The Omnipotent, who has assured Mortals by his Divine Promise, that *those who glorify him, he will glorify them*, 1 Reg. ii. 30. most eminently fulfilled the same in St. *Wenefride*, both living and dead. She glorified her Creator in her tender Years, by consecrating unto him her unspotted Virginity. She glorified Him like St. *Agatha* and St. *Agnes*, with the chearful Offering of her Head, to preserve untainted Fidelity to her Heavenly Spouse. She glorified Him, by withdrawing noble *Virgins* from the prevaricating World, and raising their Souls to the pure Love of God, instructing them in the true Spirit of Humility and Mortification. In fine, she glorified Him through the whole Course of her Life, in all Points of religious Perfection, not only relating to her Subjects, but even the *Laity*. On the other hand, the Al-

mighty

<sup>r</sup> 'Tis an unreasonable Thing for a Monk to sow any one Church-yard so thick with Saints, as *Robert* has done that of *Guitherin*, unless he intends to remove them in due time. *Keby* was thought to have been buried in *Anglesey*, and *Senan* in *Ireland*, where he was Bishop, by the same Token that he died the very same Day with St. *David* in 544. But this Thief of a Monk hath brought them both to a Place where he could come more easily at them, to pacify the People of the Parish better for the Loss of *Wenefrede*, since they had so many Saints Bodies still left with them.



*mighty* has glorified her down to the present Age, from the Year 660. According to St. *Beuno's* Prediction, there has been no Cessation of Miracles, testifying her signal Sanctity, and how dear her precious Soul is to her *Maker*. 'Tis true, this humble Virgin was accustomed to blush and to shed Tears at the first Sound of her Praises, and therefore desired and obtained that she might absent herself from *Finbon*, to live in Obscurity (as she resolved) out of the frothy Noise of Acclamations, which she could not avoid at the Place of her Martyrdom. This was her pious Contrivance, but the Design of Heaven was to glorify her at *Guitherin*. As God commanded a Torrent to flow on that *dry Valley*, where her bloody Head touched first the Ground; so at her Sepulchre he did not reject or refuse any Petition made by her devoted Suppliants.

The Historians of her Life, \*St. *Elerius* and *Salopienfis*, concluded that it would be an Undertaking to swell Volumes, if they register'd all Wonders done at her *Shrine* and *Fountain*: They thought it sufficient to acquaint the *Reader*, that the *Blind*, *Lepers*, and other diseased Persons, were perfectly cured by drinking the *Water*, or bathing themselves in the *Holy Well*. This became so famous, that tender *Mothers* made no Difficulty of casting their sickly Children into the Stream, which was a speedy Cure. Such as lived at a great Distance, and were tormented with Agues, and hot burning Fevers, caused the Water to be brought to them, and drank of it as a certain Remedy to relieve them in their Maladies. Those in very remote Places used to put one of the little *bloody Stones* which was taken out of the *Well*, into other Spring-Water, and they were cured. 'Tis said, that the *Virgin Martyr* herself prescribed the first Use of this last Remedy, who soon after her Second Death appearing to many, who in dangerous Distempers devoutly called upon her, she directed them, for their speedy Recovery, to apply the Water and Stones of the *Well* in the aforesaid manner. Such as had Swellings or old Sores bathed the Part affected, and they found present Relief.

At this wonderful *Spring* almost daily Miracles were wrought, according to a Petition she made to God before she left *Finbon*, That he would vouchsafe to bless corporally, and sanctify spiritually, all those who in future Ages should devoutly visit her *Fountain*, and there acknowledge the many Benefits with which he had favoured her. Frequent Miracles were likewise wrought at her *Tomb*. Multitudes of diseased

\* I think it fit to tell the Reader again, that *Elerius* never wrote one Line in his Life about *Wenefrede* that any one knows of. *Robert* of *Salop*, that ought to have known, (and would have told us if he had) says not one Word about him as to this Point: And the *Editor* might as honestly have said, that he himself had translated *Elerius's* Life, as say, that *Elerius* was her Historian. *Robert* does indeed say, that the Number of Miracles wrought at her *Shrine* and *Fountain* was exceedingly great. The Anonymous Writer of her Life (which I have called the *Cotton-Life*) makes all her Miracles to have been wrought at her *Fountain*, and not one at *Guitherin*, where he leaves her buried. But the Observation I would make, both to the Pilgrim and the Protestant Reader, upon this Head, is, That whatever Blessings God bestows upon People that pray in Places where there is no *famous Saint* worshipped and called upon, he bestows them for his own Goodness sake, and for his Mercy's sake in Jesus Christ, and in Compassion to his needy Creatures: But that whatever Blessing he bestows in Places where some *famous Saint* is worshipped and called upon, there they are all, it seems, bestowed upon the Intercession and for the Merits of that Saint, if they be so prayed for and asked; and I believe it will not be denied, that not one Papist in a thousand does ever ask of God any great Blessing, but for the Merits, Sake, and by the Intercession of some one or more Saints. Hence therefore it must needs be, that the Blessings which Papists receive at God's Hands must be generally accounted miraculous, and those the Protestants receive, mere Mercies and common Blessings. This is the Spring of Superstition, this the Food and Nourishment of Saint-Worship. But I desire the serious understanding Papist to consider and inquire, and then compute as well as he can, whether the Protestants or Papists of this Kingdom (in Proportion to each other's Number) receive more or greater Blessings, more Deliverances from Sickneses, or Pains, or Dangers from abroad, or sad Accidents at home. 'Tis certain that they pray alike for all the Good they think they want, and deprecate alike the Evil which they fear: But it is as certain, that the Protestant asks what he asks, and deprecates what he fears, through the Mediation, and by the Intercession, and for the Merits sake of Christ only, without any Mention of any Saint or Angel, or the Virgin *Mary*, all which, or one at least, are called upon and interested in every Papist's Prayer, tho' Christ be not excluded. If therefore the Protestants receive as many Mercies and Blessings, ordinary and extraordinary, at *Holy-well* (for Instance) as the Papists do, how is a Papist satisfied that any thing is granted him for the Sake of St. *Wenefrede*, or through her Intercession?



diseased Persons became perfectly cured by praying and kissing the Earth, where the sacred *Remainder* of her was deposited.

The holy Author of St. *Wenefride's* Life and Death, was not satisfied with a general Relation of miraculous Cures; he descends to Particulars, that unbelieving Posterity might be induced to allow Credit to what he had recorded, as to *daily Wonders*. I touch two or three with Brevity. *From the beginning of the World it hath not been heard, that any Man opened the Eyes of one born blind, unless this Man were of God,* St. *John* ix. 32. This declared the Omnipotence of the long expected *Messias*; and the like Favour soon after *our Saint's* Death, gave Wing to the Fame of her Sanctity and Power in Heaven, and spread the same through the *Western* Provinces of *Britain*. A poor Carpenter, dwelling not far from St. *Wenefride's* Well, had a Daughter born blind. She growing up, and groaning under that temporal Misfortune, hearing the Report of many miraculous Cures wrought at that *Fountain*, she importuned her Father daily to be handed thither. This was granted, and being come to the Place, she bathed her Head in the Water, and was afterwards conducted to the *Chapel*, near unto the *Well*. She spent that whole Night in Prayer, beseeching *God*, through the Merits and Intercession of St. *Wenefride*, who was *martyred* for his Love, to bestow upon her corporal Sight, to the end she might serve him better, and be an *Eye-witness* of the Wonders wrought in that Place. Towards Morning she fell into a Slumber, and when she opened her Eye-lids, she found herself blest'd with perfect Sight. This being so notorious and publick, begat fresh Veneration to the *Holy Well*, and was divulged far and near, to his Honour who is glorified in his *Saints*.

The *Saint's* Privilege was not confined to her *Well* and *Chapel*, the adjacent Places were a sort of Sanctuary under her Protection; witness what happened to some Thieves, who stole a Cow out of a Pasture near unto St. *Wenefride's* *Chapel*. The Robbers forced her over rocky Ways, that they might not be traced, but it happened otherwise; for the *Cow* fixed not one Step without leaving a <sup>t</sup> deep Impression in the Stones, as if she had been passing through soft Clay. The Footsteps also of the Thieves so visibly appeared, that the Owner next Morning missing his Beast, he and his Neighbours followed after by the miraculous Track. The Robbers perceiving them near at hand, made the best of their Way to escape, and left the Booty to whom it belonged. They afterwards observed at leisure how the *Cow* had left the clear Prints of her Feet as she was carried off, but not the least Impression after she was retrieved and returned homewards. Great Crowds of People flocked to behold the said Prints in the Stones, and published the Miracle. The Thieves themselves, apprehending lest some severe Judgment should befall them to terrify others, came penitently to the *Martyr's* Altar: They confess'd their Sin, and warned all not to commit the like Trespas.

Behold a following Example yet more terrifying. A Messenger being dispatched by a chief *Lord* of that Country, to give his Neighbours timely Notice of some approaching Danger from the bordering *Saxons* (who continually carried on War against them) was way-laid by Thieves, and pursued to St. *Wenefride's* Church, whither he fled as to a safe Sanctuary. The *Express* fasten'd his Horse near unto the Door, which they took away, not presuming to pursue him to the *Altar*, where he stood for Refuge. After their Departure the Messenger came forth, and finding that the Horse was carried off, he returned into the Church, and, prostrate, made a pious Complaint before

<sup>t</sup> I confess, I thought the *Editor* would not have given us this Miracle, it is so notable a one; but since he has been so fair, I cannot chuse but thank him for his Ingenuity, and will not find any Fault with him for not expressing how deep the Impression was that the Cow's Feet made in the Rocks every Step she took, which *Robert* says was *up to the Knees*; which considering how hard the *Welsh* Rocks are, is very deep indeed; but what of that? Know we not who it is that *clave the hard Rocks asunder*? Is any thing too hard for *God*?



fore the *Saint's Altar*, That he indeed had sustained a considerable Loss, but it was she who was highly injured: That the *Authors* of the Crime deserved exemplary Punishment, to the end others might be deterr'd from violating the Safety of her Sanctuary, and the Reverence due unto it. His Remonstrance was accepted of by Divine Justice; for the *Thief*, who had untied the Horse, and had him in actual Possession, was suddenly seized all over his Body with such Extremity of Pains, that he often called on Death to deliver him from the Torture. After a few Days, his Right Arm, (which was the Instrument of his Sin) began to swell, then to putrify and rot in a loathsome manner. This Tribulation gave Understanding to him, who had neglected Conscience in time of Health. Wherefore he came to her Church, and begged, with many Tears, the *Saint's* Pardon for his Insolence, and the Wrong he had done her. He became a true *Penitent*, and this Humiliation so much deserved her Favour, that by Degrees he was cured of his painful Ulcer. He praised God for his Mercy, and St. *Wenefride* for her Compassion, preaching to others not to offend against the Sanctity of the Place, nor to give Disturbance to the *Saint's* Clients, who in Distresses run unto her for Succour.

Take another Instance in a Passage which may seem of less Moment. A *Labourer* presumed to cut off for his own Use a Bough from an old Oak growing near unto *Guitherin* Church-Door, which afforded a convenient Shade to devout *Pilgrims*, when the Concourse was so great that they were forced to remain without, and to pray under it. No sooner had he struck his Hatchet into the Bough, than it was immoveably fixed there; and as *Jeroboam's* Hand withered, which he had stretched forth to order the Apprehension of the Man of God, *that he was not able to draw it back*, 3 Reg. xiii. 4. so this poor Man's Hand and Arm cleaved so fast to the Handle of the Ax, that with all his Strength he was not able to separate them. He attempted often in vain to let go his Hold, and finding himself in that surprizing Distress, he cried out for Help and Assistance. Some Persons hard by heard his mournful Voice, and ran to the Place, admiring at the Wonder. They exhorted him to repent, and to beg the *Saint's* Pardon and Prayers, which he did, and at the same time they all cried out, *Holy Wenefride, take Pity on him!* At these Words his Hand and Arm were set at Liberty, and were restored to their former Freedom. The Cut in the Branch was shewed to *Robert*, Prior of *Shrewsbury*, when he came to translate her sacred Reliques, of which I am going to give an Account, with the Occasion of the Removal.

In the Reign of King *William* the Conqueror, a chief Earl of his Court, called *Roger*, built a \* sumptuous Monastery in *Shrewsbury*, to the Glory of God, and the Benefit of that City, endowing the same with sufficient Revenues. An *Abbot* and his Monks being therein settled, they began to lament the Want of holy *Reliques* in their new Church, which *Wales* was stored with most abundantly, by reason that many eminent *Saints* of both Sexes had formerly flourished in those Parts, renowned for Sanctity and the Grace of Miracles. Hereupon they began to consider and consult what *Saint's* Body might be obtained by them, to bring a Blessing upon the *Religious* Family. During this Deliberation, a *Monk* of their Monastery fell dangerously sick, and moreover was so distracted in Mind, that his Brethren, both in *Shrewsbury* and *Chester*, ceased not to recommend to Almighty God his Recovery. One Day, when the virtuous *Sub-Prior* of *Chester-Abbey* had ended his Prayer for the miserable Creature, he dropp'd into an unusual Sleep, to whom a Woman appeared in glorious Attire, and said, *If you desire the sick Man's Health, let one of you*

go

\* So far from sumptuous, that *Ordericus Vitalis* says it was but meanly endowed; and *W. Malmesbury*, speaking of the *Founder*, says, *ibi Monachos locavit ex Sagio* (Says in Normandy) *angusto victu & amictu*; and *Robert* is as modest also. In After-times it was sumptuous enough.



go and offer for him a Mass in the Chapel near unto St. Wenefride's Well, and he will presently recover: After which she vanished out of his Sight.

The Sub-Prior Radulphus (that was his Name) awaked in great Amazement, but was backward in saying one Word of the Vision, fearing that it would not find any Credit. But when he heard that his Brother's Distemper grew more desperate, Charity obliged him to declare what he had seen. All the Religious were of Opinion, that St. Wenefride herself had given these Directions. Wherefore they immediately dispatched away two of their Company, who celebrated Holy Mass in her Chapel; and at that very Time, as it was calculated, the Shrewsbury Monk was restor'd to perfect Health. On this Account both he and the other Monks became more tenderly devoted to the Virgin Martyr.

Robertus Salopiensis spends seven Chapters in relating what Methods were taken, that happy Success might answer their zealous Intention. I epitomize, yet will not omit any thing which appears to me very material. The Abbot and Monks of Shrewsbury persisted with great Constancy many Years in their earnest Desires and fervorous Prayers, to obtain the Treasure of St. Wenefride's sacred Reliques. In the Reign of King Henry the First a Grant was given of them; but by reason of many Commotions after the King's Death in that Country, the Business was not effected till the second Year of King Stephen's Reign, when Abbot Herbert, in a Consult with his Monks, deputed Robert his Prior, and Richard an eminent Monk of the same Monastery, to pass into Wales to bring back with them the Reliques. To facilitate the Matter, before their Departure several Letters were transmitted to Friends in those Parts. They visited in their Journey the Bishop of <sup>z</sup> Bangor, and were directed by him to a principal Lord, who ruled in that Country, where the blessed Body was kept. The Nobleman understanding the Cause of their coming, entertained them courteously, and said, that Doubtless God and the Holy MARTYR has sent you to translate her Body to a Place where it will be more honoured. <sup>a</sup> I not only give my Consent, but I will also send my Servants to assist you. Were not I unavoidably detained by Business of Importance, I would presume to go with you in Person, and with my unworthy Hands I would deliver unto you those sacred Pledges of Sanctity.

This gracious Speech cheer'd up the solicitous Travellers, who were Seven in Number, viz. the two Priors of Shrewsbury and Chester, Richard the Monk, a  
godly

<sup>y</sup> 'Tis strange that the Saints, who whilst they live are the humblest Things on Earth, and farthest from affecting Praise and Honour, should in the other World become the most ambitious and desirous of being known and worshipped by their Fellow-Creatures; and yet this is the Character of a great Part of them, given by the Men who write their Lives. They frequently appear to some good Body or other, who little thinks of it, and tell them where they have been buried, where they would have a Chapel built, where their Prayers will be best heard, and whither they would be removed. Some good Lesson or other they still give, which evermore ends in their own Honour, though, to be sure, more to the People's Advantage.

<sup>z</sup> Robert says, that Guitherin was in the Bishop of Bangor's Diocese. 'Tis certainly now in the Diocese of St. Asaph; but in 1138 there was no Bishop of St. Asaph, and therefore the Bishop of Bangor might very probably have the Care of that Diocese also committed to him; though Robert's Words may be so construed as to signify, that at that Time there was no such Diocese as St. Asaph; and I am sure that I cannot prove there was, by any History that is left us: For the first that appears is Gilbert, who was consecrated in 1143. But whoever was the Bishop, I wonder with what Conscience he could give way to the removing such a precious Pledge of the Divine Favour out of his Province.

<sup>a</sup> The Beginning of this Lord of the Country's Speech is this; I do not think that you and your Companions have taken all these Pains without the Appointment of God, and the Good-will of the Blessed Virgin: For it may be, seeing that due Reverence is not paid her by her own Country-men, she has a mind to be carried elsewhere, and to receive that Honour from other Folks which her own refuse to give her, either through Contempt or Negligence. It would be hard to reconcile this Passage with the great Esteem and Honour which the Monk says her daily Miracles had procured her throughout the whole Country; but therefore the Editor wisely passed it by, as he has also done abundance of Inconsistencies and Absurdities besides; which puts me in some Hopes that Pilgrims begin to look a little after the Things they are to swallow, and may in time open their Eyes, and see how they are used. And I heartily wish, that, for their Sakes, some one or other of their own Communion would faithfully translate this Prior Robert's History of Wenefrede's Life and Death, and Miracles, and Translation to Shrewsbury, without either adding any thing, or leaving any thing out, but giving us the good Monk genuine and entire, as he is in the Bodley-Library, of which I have seen a Copy or two.



godly *Priest* born in that Country, and three *Attendants*. They set forward towards the *Saint's* Sepulchre, and being come near unto *Guitherin*, they met a Man, who cast them into Dejection, but not into Despair of Success. He acquainted them in plain and positive Terms, that the Inhabitants having Intelligence of their Coming, and of their Intentions, were absolutely resolved to oppose them: That no Favour nor Power of any Mortal should prevail with them to permit their chief *Saint's* Body, Patroness of their Country, to be carried away by Strangers.

These few Words did so much dispirit them, that it seemed necessary to have Encouragement from Heaven. *Prior Robert* lay concealed in a Farmer's House, and sent the *Chester Prior* and the other *Priest* to *Guitherin*, they being Men of Birth, and well known in that Country. *Robert* rising up at his usual Time to say *Mattins*, was certify'd by a devout Man, who was one of his Company, how that Night a glorious *Virgin* had appeared unto him, and had ordered him to acquaint the anxious *Prior*, that he should prosperously effect the Affair he came about, and by her Means, whose Honour he had espoused. *Robert*, something comforted with this Relation, after finishing *Mattins* fell into a Slumber, and seemed to see a former holy *Abbot* of his own Monastery, called *Godfrey*, who thus revived him; *Banish Fear, Brother Robert, of failing in your Design. Be of good Heart; for by God's Assistance we shall defeat those who oppose us, and we shall obtain what for many Years we have earnestly desir'd.* This was more than sufficient to animate him in the Prosecution of his Journey, especially the other *Prior* having sent an Express to hasten them forward, because God had prosper'd their Undertaking.

Being arrived early in the Morning at *Guitherin* Church, and having prayed some time before her Body, the chief *Priest* of the Parish came unto them, who kindly saluted them. They humbly begged his charitable Assistance, of obtaining the *Saint's* holy Reliques; which he easily granted them, as knowing before they came the Will of God. *For (said he) on Easter-Eve last, I had a Vision in this very Place. Composing myself to Rest, a beautiful young Man appeared unto me, commanding me to arise. I answered, that 'twas not yet the Hour for Mattins; so he left me. Returning the second Time, when I was more oppress'd with Sleep, he bid me rise, as before he had done; but being very heavy I replied, that I would rise in due time; and covering my Head with my Cloak, I returned to Sleep. In the third Visit he pulled away my Cloak with Violence, ordering me to follow him without Delay, as I did, very much affrighted. He led me to the Saint's Shrine, and pointing at it with his Finger, said, Note well this Place, and also my Words. I do command thee, that if some Months hence Persons come to open this Sepulchre, and to carry away with them the Saint's Body, that thou hinder them not in their holy Design, but assist them to the utmost of thy Power; lest by resisting, thou be punished (as I foretel thee) for thy Disobedience, by some irremediable Sicknes. After this the Angel vanished away.*

The good *Pastor* was not wanting to his intimated Duty. He disposed the Owners of the Village to acquiesce in the Will of God, and ordered the Parishioners to repair to the Church. *Prior Robert* seeing such a numerous Assembly, spoke unto them by an Interpreter in this Manner; *I and my Companions are come hither by Divine Appointment, to obtain of you St. Wenefride's Body, that it may be honoured in our City and Monastery, both which are much devoted unto her. The Virgin herself (as your Pastor here present knows) hath by Visions manifested her Will; and she cannot but be displeased with those, who are so bold as to contradict what she desires should be done.* Great Attention was given to what he said, and they seemed much inclined to grant the pious Request: One Man only opposed the Motion, and with a clamorous Voice declared, That they should never be deprived, by his Consent, of so great a Treasure: That the *Saint* had lived holily, and departed in that Place; her Reliques were now honoured by



by them, as they had been by their *Ancestors*; and that Almighty *God* had approved of the People's Devotion at her Shrine, by frequent *Miracles*. This Man was of an avaritious Temper, and moved to be so violent, not out of a Motive of Piety, but Lucre.<sup>b</sup> However, after many Consultations, at last they all unanimously consented, that St. *Wenefride's* Body should be delivered to the *Monks*, to be translated to *Shrewsbury*.

The *Prior* and his Companions returned their most humble Thanks, and without losing Time, desired to enter the *holy Isle*, where the *Saint's* Shrine had been visited for many Ages by devout Pilgrims. *Robert* with his Company being come before the sacred Reliques, sung joyfully to Almighty *God* Psalms of Thanksgiving. They wrapped up decently her Bones in the finest Linnen, which was brought by them on that Account; and after a Repetition of grateful Expressions to the *Pastor* and to the Inhabitants, they proceeded that Night towards *Shropshire*. In the Way homeward they cured a sick Man, who was tortur'd with a violent Distemper, by putting into Water a little of the Earth found in St. *Wenefride's* Head, and causing him to drink of it. This evident Miracle increased Veneration to those sacred *Reliques*.

*Prior Robert* gave timely Notice to his *Abbot*, that they were near at hand with the desired Treasure, and he receiv'd Orders to deposit the same in St. *Giles's* Church, which stood near unto the Gate of the City, to the end that the Body might be brought to the Monastery in greater Splendor, by a solemn Procession of the *Bishop*, *Clergy*, and People. During its Stay there, *Monks* were appointed by turns to pray Day and Night before the *Altar*, on which the *Virgin's* Bones were exposed. Multitudes of the Citizens of *Shrewsbury* joined with them in Prayer, and mutually congratulated each other for the Happiness of so potent a Patroness. St. *Wenefride* was not backward in requiting this devout Entertainment, shewing by several Miracles how acceptable the same was unto her. The following one is very remarkable.

A young Man had lain long in a miserable Condition; for his Limbs were so contracted, that he could not point a Foot, and his Head so much settled downwards towards his Knees, that he could not force it upwards, to lift an Eye to Heaven. He desired to be carried to St. *Giles's* Church, and to be set down before the *Altar*, on which stood the sacred Reliques. He spent that Night in Prayer, begging of *God*, by the Merits and Intercession of St. *Wenefride*, that he might be healed. Towards Morning he dropped into a Slumber, and before the *Priest* came to celebrate the first Mass, he awaked, and found himself perfectly cured. This astonished the whole City, seeing him to walk as readily as any of the Inhabitants.

A Day being appointed by the *Bishop*, to convey the sacred Reliques from St. *Giles's* Church to the Monastery, Notice was given both to Town and Country; and withal, that such who assisted, or were present at the Procession, would not only receive the *Bishop's* Blessing, but also would gain *Indulgences*, granted on the Account of the Solemnity. The universal Fame of Miracles, and St. *Wenefride's* Sanctity, drew together a Throng of People, who appeared in their best Apparel to honour that joyful Day. A little before the processional March, the Sky frowned with dark heavy Clouds, and threatened immediate Rain: This Storm, ready to fall, contristated very much all devoted to the *Saint*, as foreseeing that many would withdraw themselves. The [*Salopiens. Lib. ii. Cap. xv.*] *Clergy* and *Monks* besought earnestly the Omnipotent *Disposer* of all Times and Seasons, that he would please to grant dry Weather, for his own Honour, and of his *Spouse*, and for the Consolation of the congregated

<sup>b</sup> *Robert*, and *J. F.* the *Jesuit*, his pretended Translator, tell us fairly, that they were fain to stop this Fellow's Mouth, by giving him Money. The Editor was afraid of this, as thinking it disgraceful, that after so many heavenly Visions, of *Wenefrede* to *Ralph* the Sub-Prior of *Chester*; of *Wenefrede* to one of *Robert's* Servants; of *Abbot Godfrey* to *Prior Robert* himself; and of an Angel to the *Parson* of *Guithelin*, to further and assist the Translation of these sacred Bones, it should not be effected without *Corruption* and *Bribery* at last.



congregated People, at least until the Proceſſion was ended. Their Prayers were heard ſo effectually, that although violent Showers poured down in other Parts of the City, and adjacent Fields, not one ſingle Drop fell into any Street through which the bleſſed *Body* was to paſs. The thick Clouds hovered, and hung over their Heads, as gathered on purpoſe to bring St. *Wenefride* miraculoſly to her new Poſſeſſion of the holy *Benedictine* Monastery.

The Streets were lined with an incredible Concourse of devout People, who on their Knees ſhed Tears of Joy as the *Body* paſſed by, for ſo great a Bleſſing. Theſe were the tender Showers, which fell in thoſe Streets, excepted by Heaven from Rain. <sup>c</sup> The *Biſhop* and *Prieſts* brought the *Reliques* to the Monastery, which were reverently received from them by the *Abbot* and his *Monks*, as ineſtimable Jewels. They were magnificently placed upon the high *Altar*, which was dedicated to the holy Apoſtles St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, where many Miracles were wrought for the Help and Benefit of Souls and Bodies. *The Name of God be praised for ever and ever.*

Hitherto I have followed *Robertus Salopiensis*, who tranſlated St. *Wenefride's* *Body* from *Guitherin* to *Shrewsbury*, in the Year of our Redemption Eleven Hundred Thirty and Eight.

Not only this City, but likewise other Parts of *Great Britain*, became moſt tenderly devoted to the holy Virgin Martyr; which induced *Henry* Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, in a Provincial Synod in 1420, to appoint the Feaſt of St. *Wenefride* to be ſolemnly kept all over *England*, with an Office of nine Leſſons, on the third Day of *November*. *Lindewode*, Fol. 76. *Alford*, Anno 1138.

'Tis aſtoniſhing, and likewise deplorable, to hear ſome Perſons decrying Miracles, and ridiculing them with ſo great Boldneſs and Contempt, that in deſpite of holy *Doctors* of the Church, and religious *Writers*, they repreſent *Jeſus Chriſt* as one unfaithful to his ſolemn Promiſe to future Ages; and they obſtinately maintain, that all Miracles had a full Period after the Apoſtles Preaching <sup>d</sup>. They aſſent without Heſitation to Pagan *Plutarch*, *Tacitus*, or *Suetonius*; but demurr, and doubt of the Authority of that eminent *Saint* and learned Doctor, St. *John Chryſoſtome*, who wrote a whole Book on the Subject of Miracles, *Lib. de Babyla M.* whence he infers, againſt the wilful *Heathens*, that *Chriſt* is *God*, who works ſuch Wonders by the dry Aſhes of his Followers. The Miracles regiſter'd by St. *Auguſtin*, in his Book of the *City of God*; thoſe of venerable *Bede* in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory; what St. *Jerome* ſays of St. *Paul* the firſt Hermit, and St. *Hilarion*; and St. *Gregory* the Great in his Dialogues, are Matter of Mirth to theſe profane Drolls. They don't attend what Maſter they ſeek to pleaſe, by imitating the obdurate *Jews*, who, to diſcredit the Miracles of the *Son of God*, gave them a malicious Turn, ſaying, *In Beelzebub Prince of Devils, he caſts out Devils*, St. *Luke* xi. 15.

Our invincible *Heroine*, the glorious *Virgin Martyr*, St. *Wenefride*, has not met with kinder Quarter: For after the Plunder of her rich *Shrine*, and the ſcattering of her bleſſed Bones, her admirable Life muſt be liſted with the *Monkiſh Legends* <sup>e</sup>; her evident

<sup>c</sup> The Biſhop was not there himſelf, but ſent them, as *Robert* ſays, full Powers for what they were to do, and his Bleſſing withal; ſo that the Proceſſion went on as it ſhould, and not a ſingle Thread of any of the Company was wet, tho' it rained very hard in all the Country round: So graciouſly did God incline to hear the Prayers of the good Monks and Clergy, in Favour of the *Show*, and of the People's beſt Cloaths!

<sup>d</sup> The Pilgrims may be confident, that no underſtanding Proteſtant did ever maintain, that Miracles ceaſed after the Apoſtles Preaching. They never did, nor ever will ceaſe, whiſt God is able to work them. Let them be well proved, and no body will deny them.

<sup>e</sup> If the admirable Life of St. *Wenefride* be not a *Monkiſh Legend*, there never was a *Monkiſh Legend* in the World. 'Twas *Robert* the Monk that wrote it, 500 Years after her Death, and is not able to vouch for the Truth of any Matter of Fact in it. 'Twas *John of Tinmouth* the Monk that abbreviated it, and put it into his Legend 200 Years after *Robert*; and 'twas *John Capgrave* the Monk, that put it into his alphabetical Legend, an 100 Years lower ſtill: And I do not know a ſillier, worſe told Story, in all



evident Miracles are fabulous Narratives; and the stupendious Cures wrought at her *Well*, are nothing else but the experienced Effects of a *Cold Bath*. To the greater Honour of *God*, who has honoured this *Saint* to a wonderful Degree, I will instance a few late Miracles, and refer it to the *truly Christian* Reader, whether the watry Element could influence such uncommon Changes. I will not travel further back than the last Age, lest it be objected, that many things are asserted, happening long ago, which may rationally be disbeliev'd, but cannot be disproved. The original Attestations at this Moment lie before me; and where I do not abbreviate (some Cures being worded after a prolix Manner, as to Circumstances) I will deliver what I offer, in the very Expressions of the authentick Records. They are taken from Eye-Witnesses, who were Persons of tender Conscience and nice Honour, sometimes given in under their own Hand-Writing.

In the Year of our *Lord God* One Thousand Six Hundred and Six, Sir *Roger Bodenham*, Knight of the honourable Order of the *Bath*, after a tedious Quartan Ague, had a gross Humour settled in his Legs, which soon after broke out into an apparent *Leprosy*. He made use of many able Physicians, but depended most on Doctor *John David Rbes*, a *Cambro-Briton*, who commenced Doctor at *Sienna*, profess'd Physician at *Padua*, was Practitioner in divers Parts of *Italy*, and afterwards in *England*. He was near sixty Years of Age when Sir *Roger* consulted him. This learned Man ran through all Remedies that Concern could suggest, or Art devise, without any Success or Ease to the Knight. He therefore advised him to lay the Case before the College of Physicians in *London*, which was stated very faithfully and learnedly by the aforesaid *Rbes*, and was carried up by Mr. *Thomas Beale*, Steward of Sir *Roger's* Courts. The College at *London* being conven'd, the Case was read and debated, as also the Practice and Prescriptions of Doctor *Rbes*, which *Beale* deliver'd to them in Writing. They wrote back to Sir *Roger* their Opinion, That his *Physician* had hit right on his Disease, and had applied proper Remedies for a Cure: That he was a Person so eminently learned, that they acknowledged themselves his Inferiors, he having been *Reader* to most of them; and if the Method he took had no Effect, there was *not in Nature any Cure for him*. The Knight found not any Satisfaction by the Answer, which was penned to the Commendation of his Physician. Doctor *Rbes* being a *Roman-Catholick*, advised his Patient to remove to St. *Wenefride's Well*, to try, whether by the *Saint's* Intercession he might not obtain a Cure, which was not in the Power of Art to effect. He acquainted him with the Holiness of the Place, and what miraculous Favours were there obtained. Sir *Roger*, extremely desirous of Health, obeyed his Physician, and undertook a painful Journey, full seventy-eight *British Miles* from *Rotherwas* to *Holy Well*. He bathed himself in the miraculous *Fountain*, and became as sound and clean from all Scurf and Leprosy as a *Child newly born*, and afterwards continued so. This happened providentially; for as *Naaman*, Captain General of *Syria*, was directed to wash in the River *Jordan*, which compleated a twofold Cure, of his Soul as well as of his Body, 4 *Kings* v. in like manner the *Leper*, Sir *Roger*, came to wash in the Stream of *Holy Well*. He was not at that Time a *Catholick*; but the miraculous Cure, with other Motives of Credibility, induced him to embrace the true Faith, and he was reconciled to the Church of *Christ*; he rendred Thanks and Praises to Almighty *God* for both these Favours. Besides this Relation, which Sir *Roger* gave to the Lady his Wife, and to his Daughter-in-Law, Wife to his eldest Son, Mrs. *Mary Bodenham*, there were other Witnesses, the aforesaid *Thomas Beale*, *William Green* and his Wife,

*Richard*

all his Book, than this of *Wenefrede*; and I am persuaded that very few Scholars can be otherwise minded if they read it. And I say the same thing of the Miracles she is said to have wrought, by *Robert* the Historian; if there be any Rules of judging which Narratives are fabulous, and which not, I appeal to them in this Dispute.



Richard Bray, John Henley, and many more Attendants on Sir Roger Bodenham.<sup>f</sup>

The Omnipotent is more glorified in his Saints, by attributing supernatural Effects to their humble Petitions before his sacred Throne, than to natural Causes. Some Unbelievers, (if holy Scripture had not declared otherwise) might ascribe the Wholesomeness of the Waters of *Jericho* to an occult, sudden, and subterraneous Quality and Alteration, rather than to the Prophet *Elizeus's* Miracle, by casting Salt into the Fountain, 4 Reg. ii. 19. Worshippers of the great God have different Sentiments, as will appear by the following Relation. In the Month of *December*, and the Year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and thirty seven, Mrs. *Jane Wakeman*, Wife to Mr. *John Wakeman* of *Rougley*, in the Parish of *Horsbham*, and the County of *Sussex*, was tormented with a sore Breast; and having used all probable Means for a Cure, she found no Ease or Prospect of growing better. The ablest Surgeons concluded, that unless her Breast was cut off, there was not any other way to relieve her; neither would they by that Operation give Assurance of a Recovery, for they verily believed that her Breast was incurable, and to attempt the Amputation, might hasten on the Gentlewoman's Death. They declared this to her Friends, but encouraged her with better Hopes. Mrs. *Wakeman* regarded not their Opinion, with which she was privately acquainted, but resolved to have Recourse to Heaven, and to undertake a Pilgrimage to St. *Wenefride's* Well in *Flintshire*. She began her Journey from *London* in the Month of *June*, One thousand six hundred and thirty eight, accompanied by her said Husband, Mr. *Richard Wakeman* his Brother, and one *Francis Nash*. She had at that time two great Holes in her Breast under the left Pap, which were seen both by Catholics and Protestants. When she came into *Worcestershire*, to a Place called *Beeley*, she left there behind her all her Salves and Ointments, having a strong Faith and Hopes in Almighty God's Mercy, and in the Prayers of blessed St. *Wenefride*, that she should not have any further Occasion of using them. She only applied clean Linnen, to keep her Breast sweet; for the Corruption burst out in so great Quantities, that it forced its Way through many Folds, and ran down into her very Shoes. Her Breast left off running at her first Bathing in the *Holy Well*: She stayed one Night only in that Town, but went thrice into the Fountain; and from the very Instant of finishing her Devotions, to her dying Day, which was five Years after, she never found any Pain in that Breast, nor any Sore, or Sign thereof, except a little Seam, to shew the Place where the two Holes were miraculously closed up. She bore afterwards three Children, and in drying up her Milk, found that Breast least troublesome, which before had been ulcer'd. I have this Account in Mr. *Wakeman's* Hand-Writing, which he gave, as a perpetual Testimony of the Favour, and also of the Passage which follows.<sup>f</sup>

In the Year One thousand six hundred and thirty, the aforesaid Mr. *Wakeman* of *Rougley*, &c. being at *Holy Well*, saw a Man lying dead, hard by the Well itself. This profane Wretch, the Day before, had much derided and scoffed at blessed St. *Wenefride*, who suffer'd a glorious Martyrdom in Defence of her Virginity; he also gave abusive and uncivil Language in the Presence of Mr. *Wakeman*, to the Pilgrims, who came thither to perform their Devotions. The Coroner was called, a  
Jury

<sup>f</sup> Sir Roger Bodenham was, it seems, cured of a desperately sore Leg, by the Waters of *Holy-well*; and Mrs. *Wakeman*, of a sad sore Breast that was thought to be incurable. These are therefore good Proofs, that God worketh Miracles by St. *Wenefrede*, or at her Intercession. This Editor is oft complaining against such as are Enemies to Miracles; but let me tell him, the People who vilify Miracles, are those especially who make them cheap and common. Are all the People that receive any great Benefit at *Holy-well* miraculously cured? or if they are, is it St. *Wenefrede* that does the Work? or is it certainly by her Intercession? What Pity it is, that some great Saint or other hath not taken Possession of the Waters of the *Bath*, *Tunbridge*, *Astrop*, *Sunning*, and other Places? Great Cures indeed are yearly wrought at those Places, as much Experience witnesses; but not a Miracle among them all, because, forsooth, they are under the Protection of no particular tutelar Saints, to whom the Afflicted and Diseased address. Sir Roger turned Papist, therefore we hear of his Cure as miraculous.



Jury impanelled, and the Body was view'd. After mature Deliberation they gave in this Verdict, *That God's just Judgment was the Cause of his Death, for his uncivil Carriage in that Place.*<sup>s</sup> Thus Mr. Wakeman, an Eye-Witness. I could add here the Names of such, who in the Year One thousand six hundred and thirty-seven, ordered the Image of St. *Wenefride* to be defaced, and the Iron Bars to be taken away, which supported the pious *Visitants* in the rapid Stream; how both he who commanded it, and those who executed his Orders, contrary to the Persuasion of several moderate *Protestants*, were shortly after exemplarily punished by uncommon Misfortunes and Disasters. Moreover, had I not confined myself to the last Century, I could mention Precedents, more than sufficient, to caution Persons from being too forward in their Contempts of St. *Wenefride* and her *Well*, which is sometimes severely taken notice of by him, who has said, *He that touches you, touches the Apple of mine Eye*, Zech. ii. 8. But let us return from this Digression, if it may be called so.

The infinite Wisdom of God thinks fit, not to work Miracles by the Intercession of his *Saints*, in all Places, nor towards all Persons, but as it pleaseth him, *St. Aug. Epist. 137.* The greatest Wonders are wrought at St. *Wenefride's Well*, but I relate here a Cure at a great Distance, which tends much to the Glory of our *Saint*. In the Month of *June*, and the Year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and forty-seven, the Wife of *John Clec*, Gardiner in the Suburbs of the City of *Worcester*, being diseased, undertook on foot a Journey to *Holy Well*, hoping to find there the Recovery of her Health. Passing through *Kidderminster*, in her Way to *Flintshire*, she called at her Cousin *Anthony Cooke's House*. Having refreshed herself, she acquainted her Cousin with the Occasion of this her *Pilgrimage*. The long Discourse on the Subject of *Holy Well* was over-heard by a sick Woman, who lay in the next Room. This poor Creature had continued bed-rid six or seven Years; she was always lame, and had been put upon the said *Cooke* (who was a Linnen Weaver) to be maintained at the Charge of the Parish. Just as the *Pilgrim* was taking Leave, and ready to set forwards, the bed-rid Woman cried out to speak with her: The Business was this; she desired her for the Passion of *Christ*, to carry for her a single Penny (which she gave her) to *Holy Well*, and to bestow it on the first poor Body she there happened to meet, humbly desiring that Party to go into the Well for her, and to pray that she might have the Use of her Limbs. This was promised and performed.

The poor Widow's *two Mites*, cast into the Treasury of the *Temple*, were so acceptable to the *Searcher of Hearts*, that he declar'd *she had given more than all together*, Luke xxi. 3. for it was her whole personal Estate. The opulent *Scribes* and *Pharisees* might sling in Handfuls of Gold, they found no Want; this poor Creature bestowed on her God what seemed necessary to relieve herself, perchance she saying at the same Time with a flaming Heart, *Lord! if I was Mistress of the two Worlds, as I am of these two Mites, they should be employ'd to your Honour.* St. *Wenefride* accepted the single Penny sent to her *Well*, with so great Faith and Devotion; 'twas all the bed-rid Woman had to present her with. *Clec's Wife* having remain'd at her Journey's End six or seven Days, returned homewards; and coming to *Kidderminster*, she called at her Cousin *Cooke's House*, where, to her great Astonishment, she saw the lame bed-rid Woman perfectly recovered; and inquiring at what Time she became sound, 'twas computed, that on that Day, and the very Hour when the single Penny was delivered at *Holy Well*, the bed-rid Woman arose, walked round the House, and

abroad,

<sup>s</sup> The Verdict of this Jury was ridiculous and false: For tho' no Man should abuse the *Pilgrims*, or speak contemptibly of a true Saint; yet how can any Man say that a sudden Death was judicially inflicted on a Wretch by God, for giving ill Language? God's Judgments are a great Depth. God is righteous in all his Ways, and no Man suffers without deserving it; but it passes human Skill, to tell when Sufferings are Judgments. But these are Stories fit to terrify an ignorant and superstitious Generation.



abroad, to the Admiration of the whole *Parish*.<sup>h</sup> This miraculous Change, at so great Distance, could not be the Product of a *Cold Bath*. This Passage was diligently examined by Mr. *James Bridges*, who had *Anthony Cooke* and *Clec's* Wife before him, who both attested the Truth of what is here related. In Testimony whereof Mr. *Bridges* recorded the same in his own Hand-Writing. This was the worthy Gentleman, who being *Sheriff* of *Worcester*, proclaimed there the King in the Year 1651; for which he suffered much from the Rebels, and with Difficulty escaped the Gallows.

A languishing Patient perplexes the Physician, and Distempers radicated from Infancy, causes him to fling aside his Books, and to dismiss the Hopes of a Cure. This seem'd the Case of Mrs. *Mary Numan*, Wife of Mr. *Hugh Numan*, who was Clerk to Sir *Jeremy Smith*, then Captain of one his Majesty's Men of War. At five Years of Age, by an Ague and Fever, she was reduced to that Lameness and Impotence, that for the Term of eighteen Years she was not able to stand or point a Foot to the Ground. Her Arm Bones were so much out of their natural Places, that one reach'd over and interfer'd with the other; and the Bones of her Legs were so dislocated, that they extended some Inches behind those of the Thighs. Being in this miserable Condition, and having considerable Friends at Court, she made her Application and Address unto them. By their Interest, she had the Opinion of all the King's Physicians, who declared, that naturally *she was incurable*. Hereupon she was touched by the King, but it pleas'd God not to restore her to Health. She was two Summers and one Winter at the Bath in *Somersetshire*, and at other Places in *England* famous for Cures, as also at three Wells in *Scotland*; altho' she could not make any other Shift for herself, than with great Difficulty and Pain to crawl a little upon her Knees. She was carried into *France*, and was put thrice into the second Grape-Press, in divers Parts of that Kingdom. She was touched at *Paris* by the French King: In *Flanders* she visited *Sichem* and other Places of Devotion; she was eighteen Weeks at *Aquisgrane*: In *Holland* she had the Advice of an *Italian* Prince, famous for his Skill in Physick. To be brief, she was conducted to the Baths in *Portugal*; all which Journies were for the most part at the King of *England's* Expence, but not to any Effect or Alteration in the Cripple. 'Tis true, she had been formerly twice at St. *Wenefride's Well*, without any Amendment, yet had an earnest Desire and strong Impulse to make a third Pilgrimage. She was comforted with these inviting Thoughts both awake and sleeping; wherefore, towards the latter End of *May*, in the Year One thousand six hundred and sixty six, she began her Journey from *London*, and arrived at *Holy Well* on *Wednesday* in *Whitson* Week, being the sixth Day of *June*, in the same Year. Going into the *holy Fountain*, she immediately felt (with much Pain) her Bones to move, and draw to their right Places; so that by the Help of others, namely Mrs. *Degg* of *Wolverhampton* (who with Mr. *Paling* her Kinsman, and other Pilgrims of *Staffordshire*, were at that Time in the Well) she was able to stand upon her Feet, which she had not done before (as is already said) for eighteen Years, and to walk a little in the Water. On *Trinity Sunday* she went the fifth Time into the Well, and afterwards walked without any Help of others, and on *Wednesday* following she undertook a Journey towards *Ireland*. This Miracle was attested, with all the recited Particulars, by herself, in the Presence of *John Hughes de Combe*, and *Robert Price de Aelwyducha*, as Witnesses to her Subscription. If the *Cold Bath* had an occult Virtue to restore her Limbs, it had been needless to return a third Time, being the former Visits seem'd to be made in vain. She had heard of St. *Beuno's* Prediction concerning a third

Payment

<sup>h</sup> The Story of this bed-rid Woman's Cure, may be, every Word of it, true, and yet St. *Wenefrede* be nothing concerned in it. Are all the Prayers that are put up at *Holy-well*, offered to God by *Wenefrede*? or is all the Good that is done there, rewarded by God for her Sake? Happy Pilgrims! These are Encouragements indeed. There is nothing wanting but Truth.



Payment of Devotion at that Place, and complying, she was blessed with the surprizing Cure.<sup>i</sup>

On the fourth of *April*, One thousand six hundred and sixty six, about five of Clock in the Afternoon, *Hugh* the Son of *Thomas Williams*, of the Parish of *Whitford* in the County of *Flint*, Yeoman, a Boy of eight Years and nine Months old, having a Body of just Proportion in each Part to the Height of his Stature, which was four Foot, and playing with one of his School-fellows near the Mill, which stands but at a little Distance from the holy *Fountain*, he attempted to skip over the Water, but came short of the other Side, and dropped into the Current, where 'tis most impetuous, three Yards from the great Water-Wheel, and was immediately carried out of Sight. The Standers-by gave him for lost, as prudently supposing, that besides the evident Danger of drowning, he would be crushed to Death; for betwixt the Wheel and the paved Bottom of the Channel under it, there is not the Space of two Inches; yet he was suddenly convey'd into the Ditch beyond the afore-said Wheel. His Companion seeing the sad Accident, and knowing nothing of his Safety, raised a mournful loud Cry, which so alarmed the *Master* and forty Scholars, that they all ran out to learn the Occasion of it: The *Miller* also, and others, were in the same Fright; but one *William Bowen*, who was standing with an angling Rod four Yards below the Wheel, espy'd him endeavouring to creep out of the Ditch, and complaining that he had lost his Shoe. The Boy was taken into a House, and that Moment a Surgeon was called: His Body being examined, the Youth was found not to have received any Crush or Contusion, except a little Skin ruffled off one Ankle, as a Mark to declare what would have become of him, if he had not been miraculously preserved.<sup>k</sup>

*Cornelius,*

<sup>i</sup> If the Cure of Mrs. *Newman* be to be accounted miraculous, because it was not effected by any of the Courses taken with her in *England*, *France*, or *Portugal*, or other Countries to which she travelled, nor by being twice at *Holy-well* before, then certainly no Chronical Distemper can be cured without a Miracle; and the last Remedy that is applied must be that Miracle; and if applied at a Place where any famous Saint is worshipped, then is that wondrous Cure wrought by that Saint. But why was not Mrs. *Newman* cured by being twice at *Holy-well* before, if the *Cold Bath* be that which does the Feat? Ask your Physician, ask your own Experience, if the same Medicine has not succeeded at one Time, that would not at another? and if the same Means have not been often used, without Success, which have at last, through God's Blessing, proved effectual? But she had heard, belike, of St. *Beuno's* Prediction, concerning a *Third Payment* of Devotion at that Place, and complying, she was blessed with the surprizing Cure. *Beuno's* Prediction (if it must be called so) was, That whoever should ask to be delivered from any Evil or Disease by her, should certainly be delivered at the *first*, or *second*, or *third* time of asking, *if it were for his Good*; but if he were not delivered at the *third* time from his bodily Sufferings, he might then expect to die shortly after, but might be assured of receiving greater Benefits to his Soul, which would be much better for him, than if he had received the Health or Blessing he sought for. But who does not see, that this is a Fetch of the crafty Monks, and not at all agreeable to the Simplicity of the Times in which *Beuno* is said to have lived? If you do not succeed at first, come a second time, and then a third: The oftner Pilgrims come to *Holy-well*, the more the Monks are like to get by them, for I suppose they come not empty-handed. But what if I do not succeed the third Time? why then, I shall have a better thing, in another Place; so that still it shall be worth my while to come *three* times to *Holy-well*; and if I think so in good earnest, then I shall certainly think myself obliged to leave something at the Altar, that the Saint may be the better served by such as minister before her.

<sup>k</sup> How the strange Escape of this Boy should turn to the Honour of St. *Wenefrede*, passes my Skill to understand; unless all the Mercies God bestows upon the People of that Town and Neighbourhood, must be owing to her Intercessions, Prayers, and Merits. But in this Case, she was not so much as asked or sought to: And yet I am willing to make the most I can of this Relation, and desire the *Pilgrims* to consider, that if St. *Wenefrede* does thus protect or intercede for such as never seek to her, nor know, 'tis likely, any thing of her, then Protestants may fare as well in their Ignorance, and tho' they address not to her, as those who believe her whole Legend, and pray to her every Day; which would be a discouraging thing indeed. And, to be serious, that I take to be the Truth of the Case. The Protestants *do not* pray to Saints, because they have no Command from God to do so; which is sufficient for their Justification, were praying to Saints never so innocent. God has left them, by his Silence in the Case, at their Liberty; 'tis therefore an indifferent thing, and they have chosen the Part they like. But farther, the Protestants *dare not* pray to Saints, for fear of provoking God to Jealousy: It looks so like his giving his Honour to another, (which he has certainly forbidden) that they are afraid of doing it. Supposing they are mistaken, is God offended with Mistakes of such a kind as this? Suppose that God is not jealous, is there no Ground to think he is? Can it displease the merciful and gracious Creator, to see his Creatures careful of offending him,



*Cornelius*, the Son of *John Nicholas*, of the Parish of *Tremaine*, in the County of *Cardigan*, about two Miles distant from *Cardigan Town*, being a young Man of seventeen Years of Age, both Fatherless and Motherless, entred into Service with his Aunt. On the one and twentieth of *December*, One thousand six hundred and seventy three, a little before Night, he was struck with so great a Weakness by a sudden Blast, finding racking Pains from his Knees downwards, that he was not able to go or stand. Several Remedies were used, as Ointments, Plaisters, Cutting and Lancing about the Toes and Ancles, to the very Bones. They continued this Method till towards *Easter*, but finding them insignificant, and that they were rather prejudicial to him, 'twas resolved to convey him to *St. Wenefride's Well*. His Relations were indigent, and having no other Means, he was recommended to the Charity of good People, from Door to Door, on a Hand-barrow. The *Welsh* distinguish themselves from other Nations, by a Chearfulness in assisting those in great Necessity: They knew whither the Cripple was to be carried, and on what Account; therefore they lent helping Hands, that he might finish a Journey of ninety Miles. He was brought to *Holy Well* on the eleventh of *June*, and early next Morning was put into the *Fountain*, being *Friday* in *Whitsun-week*. No sooner was he in the Water, than he found himself perfectly recovered; he walked in the *Well*, out of it, and ever after continued in good Health, to the Admiration of all those who had been Spectators of his former miserable Condition. Glory be to God, who is wonderful in his Saints.<sup>1</sup>

It carries a sort of Demonstration for Miracles, when those who obstinately oppose them, are constrained to own them. Amongst the rest, perchance, there are none more positive in their erroneous Opinions, than those Men called *Quakers*. They deny absolutely the Divine Efficacy of *Baptismal Water*, but the flowing Fountain of *St. Wenefride* prevailed with *Roger Whetstone* to renounce his Heresy, and by holy *Baptism* to become a devout *Christian Catholick*. This *Roger*, by Education a *Quaker*, by Profession a Taylor, dwelling in *Sidmore*, within the Parish of *Bromesgrave* in *Worcestershire*, at sixty Years of Age, was visited with a violent Infirmary, which disabled him to such a Degree, that he could not feed himself. He was confined to his Bed seventeen Weeks, after which he found an Abatement of the severe Pains, which before ran through his whole Body. He was so weak, when able to rise, that he could not put his Hand to any Work, but halting on Crutches,

he him, by abstaining from such things, as neither Reason nor Revelation command them to do, nor yet invite them to? But will they not be hereby justly deprived of all the Fruits and Advantages that may attend and follow the Prayers and Intercessions of so many good and great Saints as are in Heaven? To this I answer in a few Words, That if the Saints and blessed Spirits above do pray, and make Intercession for the People that are on Earth, they do it either from their own Benignity and good Nature; or else, because they are ordered and appointed of God to do so. If of their own good Nature, then they will do it whether I ask or no, especially if they understand that I forbear asking, because I am afraid of offending God thereby, or because I believe they are at too great Distance to hear me, or believe they have no Power to help me; which are all of them very innocent Mistakes, if they be Mistakes, and such as they were liable to themselves whilst alive, and therefore such as cannot pervert the Goodness of their Nature, and hinder them from interceding for me, if they did so before. But if they intercede, because it is the Appointment and Will of God that they should do so, then they will never cease their Intercession till God appoint them to cease; and who can so far distrust his infinite Goodness, as to think he should command his blessed Servants not to intercede for those who pray not to them, only because they find no Reason so to do, nor any Precept so to do, and think they should offend him by so doing? So that, upon the whole Matter, if the Saints do intercede with God, the Protestants must have the Advantage of their Intercession, whatever it is, altho' they do not pray to them; but if the Saints do not intercede, then are the Protestants upon the safer Side, because they do not pray to them. And this I say of *Saints*, that are certainly so, and as surely now in Heaven, as I am now on Earth, and do from my Heart truly honour their Memory, and bless God for their great Virtue, Sanctity, and good Example: But as for *Wenefrede*, and *Beuno*, and *Elerius*, and such like, I look upon them to be so far from being Saints, that I doubt much if ever there were such Creatures living on Earth, as they are described to be.

<sup>1</sup> I leave it to the *Pilgrims* themselves, to consider, whether God is more wonderful in his Saints, because *Cornelius Nicholas* was cured at the cold Waters of *Holy-well*, than he would have been, had *Cornelius* been cured at the hot Waters of the *Bath*, where neither *Wenefrede*, nor any other Saint, is called upon, or worshipped in particular.



he begged his Bread from Door to Door. Having continued *three Years* in this sad Misery, he was told by a *Flintshire* Man, dwelling in his Neighbourhood, that at a Place in his Country, called *Wenefride's Well*, great Numbers of lame Persons, and diseased, were frequently, after a miraculous Manner, restored to Health. It came into the *Quaker's* Mind, suggested by a better *Spirit* than commonly guided him, that the *Lord* would help him at that *Fountain*. In this he was so confident, that not the least Doubt occurred to the contrary: Wherefore, in the Year One thousand six hundred and sixty seven, he began his Journey on Crutches, attended by a young Girl, his Daughter; and after many Days Travel, he came to *Holy Well* about Noon, on the twenty-eighth Day of *August*, in the aforesaid Year. He could not be induced to wash in the *Well*, that had a smattering of Popery and Superstition; but sitting at the Side of it, he drank one Cup of the Water, and he became as it were in a Trance: Returning to himself, he desired another Dish of the same Water, and having drunk it off, he threw away both his Crutches, and found himself *strangely, suddenly, and perfectly cured*. He walked round the *Well*, dropping many Tears of Joy, to join the Stream of that miraculous Spring. The Power and Goodness of St. *Wenefride's* <sup>m</sup> heavenly Spouse, placed the Miracle out of the Reach of Cavil and Dispute,

<sup>m</sup> Give as much Glory as you will to *Wenefrede's* heavenly Spouse (if that must be the Name of *Christ*) for the Cure of *Roger Whetstone*, or any other, and no one will oppose it: But, in the Name of God, what had St. *Wenefrede* to do, in restoring this poor Cripple? Did he desire her Intercession? No, he was a *Quaker*. But did she intercede with her Spouse for him? Yes. And did he hearken to her Prayers, and heal him? Yes. How does that appear? The Priests say so, and he was healed. Whatever the Priests say then is true, and whoever is healed at *Holy-well*, is interceded for by *Wenefrede*, and healed at her Intercession. Are not these Conclusions certain, and incontestable? Might not a Man fill up a thousand Pages with Miracles, if these are Miracles? But I will not meddle with that; let these Cures pass for Miracles---I only say, (and pray the *Pilgrims* to take notice of it) that supposing there was such a Woman once in Being, that she was a good Nun, that her Head was struck off, and set on again, and that she afterwards lived a holy Life, and died in the Reputation of Sanctity---Supposing all these things of *Wenefrede* to be true and certain, (as I affirm not one single Point of them is, or can be proved by any Rules of History) yet is it not in the Power of any Man living to prove, to any reasonable Man's Conviction, that she does, or ever did, intercede with God, for the Cure of any lame or diseased Person at *Holy-well*, or that God did ever heal or restore any lame or diseased Person, for the Sake or through the Intercession of St. *Wenefrede*. Let any Man try to clear these two Points if he can; 1. That *Wenefrede* did, at any Time, intercede with God for such a Man, or such a Woman; 2. that God did, at *Wenefrede's* Intercession, restore such a Man, or such a Woman, to Health or Soundness. Is it enough to say that such a Man or Woman came to *Holy-well* sick and diseased, and made their Prayers to *Wenefrede* to intercede with God to restore them, and went away restored? Is this enough to prove that *Wenefrede* did really and indeed intercede with God for them, merely because they asked her so to do? What Certainty can any one have, that as soon as he has prayed to all the Angels and Archangels, the Apostles, Saints, Martyrs, Confessors, and holy Spirits of Men and Women that are in Heaven, they will intercede with God for him; what Certainty, I say, can he have that they immediately fall down before the Throne, and do it? And so I say of any one particular Saint of the whole Number; what Certainty can any one have that he or she either hears his Prayer, or if they hear, that they immediately attend, and grant it? May they not possibly demurr? Have they not Liberty to consider the Petition, and see if it be reasonable, or just, or fit to offer? I would not be thought to speak too slightly of things that other People set great Value on, and treat in earnest; but I cannot forbear saying, that having seriously considered all the Reasonings of the Ancients, and the Improvements of the modern Advocates for praying to Saints, I do not find they have proved, that the Prayers of People on Earth arrive to Saints in Heaven, with the hundredth Part of the Certainty, that Letters go from one Country to another, (not by the *Post*, but) by the *Packet-Boat* at Sea, subject to all the Winds that Blow, and all the Accidents of that uncertain Element. There is, indeed, no thinking how a Saint in Heaven can hear the mental and the vocal Prayers of all that call upon him, from all the different Quarters of the World, at one and the same Time, without supposing such a Knowledge of the Secrets of all Hearts, and of all that is said upon the Earth, as differs little, if any thing, from the Omniscience of God himself, which is an Attribute that, if any be, is incommunicable to a Creature, and without which he could not be qualified to be Judge of all the Earth. And yet without this Knowledge both of all Hearts and all Tongues, how vain would it be to pray to Saints from all Places? I have never yet seen it well proved that the Saints do intercede with God for Mankind in general, or for the Church Militant in particular: But I will give it for granted that they do, if it pleases God; but it does not follow from thence that they either hear what People ask, or intercede for those especial things which are asked; any more than it follows, that I know what my Relations in the *Indies* ask of God, or want, because I remember them in my daily Prayers, and beg of God to give them what he sees is most expedient for them. Supposing therefore that *Wenefrede* were indeed a Saint in Heaven, and that she did intercede with God, as the rest of the Saints are supposed to do, for the Church in general; yet it would not thence follow, that she interceded for *me* in particular, or that she knew who I was, or what I wanted,



Dispute, by healing an old Cripple in a Minute, with two Draughts of Water. Another higher Cure was wrought in the Soul of this *Quaker*; for giving Attention to the Inspirations of the *Holy Ghost*, and an impartial Ear to the *Motives of Belief*, he embraced the *Roman-Catholick Faith*. He and his Son (eleven Years of Age) received the holy Sacrament of Baptism, at which the greatest Quality of that County were pleased to stand *Patrines*.

Were it not to offer a needless Repetition of what is said already, I would set down at large the Attestation of *Robert Hill*, a most rigid *Quaker*, which lies now before me, concerning the Truth of the aforesaid Miracle. Have Patience at least with some Part of it, as he words it. *I Robert Hill, of the County of Worcester, having lately been Overseer of the Poor of the Parish of Bromesgrave, within the said County, and now a near Inhabitant of the said Town, do testify, That I am, and have been well acquainted with Roger Whiston, alias Whetstone, of about sixty Years of Age, Taylor, Dweller in the same Town; and that I knew him for these three last Years lame and infirm, that he could not work at his Trade, nor go without Crutches, and so feeble, that he was not able to feed himself----- (Hill makes a Recital of his ten Days Journey, and of his sudden Cure at the Well, as Whetstone related the same to him; then adds) For my own Part, I can well say, that I knew him infirm and lame, often coming, in these late Years, on his Crutches, to beg at my Door; and now being returned from Holy-well, is very strong, and well able to work at his Trade, to the great Wonder of the Inhabitants of Bromesgrave, some whereof, presently upon his Return, being lame and infirm, came to Holy-well, in hopes to be also cured; and upon their Return they reported to me, that they were better in Health than formerly, &c.----- In witness hereto I put my Hand, the second Day of October, 1667. ROBERT HILL.* In the same Account the said *Robert Hill* declares, how his own lame Girl, of fourteen Years of Age, was cured, by only making use of Holy-well Water.

I could

I wanted, or knew that I came to ask something of her. None of all these things follow, from supposing her to be a Saint, and a general Intercessor for all Christians. I must therefore have a particular Revelation from God, to tell me that *Wenefrede* did, at such a Time, intercede for me, or else how should I know it? Well, but the *Event* tells me she did; I came to *Holy-well* sick and lame, and there I fell upon my Knees, crossed myself devoutly, lift up my Heart, my Eyes, and Hands to Heaven, drank of the Waters, bathed myself therein, and prayed to St. *Wenefrede* to pray to God to restore me to my Health and Limbs; and after a due Continuance at the Place, and Repetition of my Prayers, and Use of the Waters, I found myself sound and well. And is not this sufficient Proof and Certainty, that *Wenefrede* did hear my Prayers, did intercede with God at that time for me, and that God at her Intercession did restore me? Does not the happy Issue and Event verify and prove all this? No, not one Point; for *Roger Whetstone*, a *Quaker* and a Cripple, came to *Holy-well*, and drank the Waters, and bathed himself in them, and recovered his Limbs as well as you; and so far from praying to *Wenefrede*, that it does not appear he prayed to God himself to be restored. How is it therefore possible for you to prove that you were restored at *Wenefrede's* Intercession, when that poor Man and a hundred more have been restored without her Intercession, not only such as were ignorant of her Saintship, but such as were downright Disbelievers, and such as only trusted in God? As therefore your praying to *Wenefrede*, does not suppose that she hears you; nor your desiring her to intercede for you, suppose that she does indeed intercede for you; so neither does your obtaining what you ask, suppose that you obtain it for that Intercession's sake. These are all of them fallacious Consequences, that crafty Priests delude poor Pilgrims with: And every beneficial Cure that a Protestant receives at *Holy-well*, is a Demonstration that *Wenefrede's* Intercession is both a needless and a useless Thing, although it should be innocent to ask it, which I am far from thinking it to be; but I would not enter into any new Controversy. I have gone thus far, in hopes that what I have already offered, might make it needless to consider the *Litanies* and *Prayers* which I see are printed anew at the End of this little Book: For if what I have said in the foregoing Pages, to the discrediting this Legend of St. *Wenefrede*, shall not have its Weight, the Pilgrims will go on in their old Way, for any thing I shall say farther: But if it have, then is my farther Labour superseded also, and they will go to God and seek their Remedies at his Hands, through the Intercession, and for the Sake and Merits of Jesus Christ alone, our common Lord and Saviour, who ever liveth to make Intercession for us, and is both able and desirous to save to the utmost all that come to God by Him.

I will therefore trouble the *Devout Pilgrims* with no more Arguings, but pray them to consider these few Things following, which I have in several Places mentioned before.

Whether they would ever pray, unless they were sure there were a God?

Whether they would ever pray to God, unless they were sure that God heard their Prayers?

Whether they would pray to God, unless they were sure that he *could* give them what they asked; and *would*, if he saw it fitting and expedient for them?



I could bring a *Cloud of Witnesses* (to use St. Paul's Expression, *Heb. xii. 1.*) asserting other undeniable Miracles wrought by St. *Wenefride's* Intercession, not in an obscure Corner, but *in the Face of the Sun*. I solemnly declare, that I leave behind twice as many Wonders, happening in the last Century, of which many were Eye-witnesses, at the holy *Fountain*. *Holy-well* seems to resemble, in some sort, the *Probatica* Pond, where, in five Porches, there lay a great Multitude of sick Persons, of blind, lame, and withered, St. John v. 3. In the travelling Season the Town appears populous, crowded with zealous Pilgrims, from all Parts of Britain. The *Well* itself receives a Succession of Visitants from Sun-rise till late at Night. The many Hand-barrows and Crutches, which have been hung at the Pillars, demonstrate the Mercies of God, and the powerful Intercession of the *Virgin-Martyr*. They are soon removed by those who envy the Glory of our Saint. I forbear to recount at large the Recovery of blindish Eyes, of barren Women becoming fruitful, of inveterate violent Convulsions suddenly ceasing, of deaf Persons favour'd with hearing, of stubborn Devils cast out of possess'd People (certainly the immortal Spirits, who suffer the eternal Torments of Hell, could not be forced away by the material Elements of a Cold Bath.) These, and many others of the last Age I omit, not to increase the Price and Bulk of a Pocket-Book, as also that it may be ready to wait on those to whom it is dedicated. St. *Augustin*, in his xii<sup>th</sup> Book of the *City of God*, writing of a blind Man who received Sight, and of other Miracles, when St. *Ambrose* translated the holy Bodies of SS. *Gervasius* and *Protasius*, thought it sufficient Conviction against the incredulous scoffing Heathens, that *Immensò Populo Teste, res gesta est, A vast Concourſe of People were able to attest the Truth of them*; which is exactly our present Case.

I conclude

Whether God has not commanded all Men to come to him by Prayer?

Whether he has not commanded all Men to come to him by Jesus Christ, their Mediator and Intercessor?

Whether Jesus Christ alone be not an able, willing, and sufficient Mediator and Intercessor? or whether there be Need of any other?

Whether it be as certain that there was such a Woman as *Wenefrede*, as that there is any Man or Woman now living in *North-Wales*? If not, how can they pray to her?

Whether it be as certain that *Wenefrede's* Head was cut off, and set on again, as that any other Saint heretofore suffered Martyrdom? If not, how know they that she was a *Martyr*?

Whether it be as certain that she is now a Saint in Heaven, as that St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* are now in Heaven? If not, how can they pray to her?

Whether it be certain that all who are in Heaven, hear all the Prayers that are made to them on Earth?

Whether the Saints know distinctly and separately the Prayers of one Man from another?

How is it, that Men on Earth can be sure that such a one is a Saint in Heaven, and that she hears their Prayers, and intercedes with God for them, unless God hath told them so, either in the Scriptures, or by other particular Revelation?

Hath God by either of these Ways told them, that *Wenefrede* is a Saint in Heaven, and hears their Prayers, and intercedes for them? If not, how come they to pray to her?

Is there any Command, any thing like a Command, in the Scriptures, that Men should pray to Saints? Is there any Encouragement so to do? And who would venture on such a Practice without a positive Command, when they may go to God by Christ, which is commanded, and to which there can be no Exception or Objection, and for whose sake alone it is that any Prayers are heard or granted?

And now I cannot chuse but hope, that the devout Pilgrims, after considering all these Things, will require at their Priests Hands a more full and satisfactory Account of the Certainty of the Life, Beheading, Resuscitation, Second Death, and Miracles of St. *Wenefrede*, than Prior Robert (500 Years after her supposed Life) hath given them in a poor, miserable, suspicious Legend; and that they will no longer address themselves to one by Prayer (of whose very Being they are, and can be so little assured) in Terms as great, as strong, and weighty, as they would use to Jesus Christ himself. Such are the following ones in the Prayer to St. *Wenefrede*: *O singular Hope of all that fly unto thee with Confidence and Humility; though unworthy, yet we thy devoted Pilgrims make our Addresses unto thee. O Sanctuary of Piety, look upon us with patient Eyes, receive our Petitions, accept our Offerings, and present our Supplications to the Throne of Mercy, that through those thy powerful Intercessions, God will be pleased to bless this our Pilgrimage, and grant us our Request and Desires, through Jesus Christ his Son, &c.* Think with yourselves if this be right, to take a Saint upon Trust, from the Tradition of a poor, ignorant, obscure, and superstitious Corner of the Land, dress'd up by a Monk, who was employed to steal her Bones, and thereby bring the Advantage of Oblation to his Monastery, and give her such great Names and Titles, such Appellations and Attributes, in Prayers addressed to herself, as you would give to Jesus Christ himself, the Everlasting Son of God, and King of Saints, if you should go on Pilgrimage to any Place devoted to his Name and Honour, to ask him any Favour. Think with yourselves, I pray you, for your Good, if this be right and fitting.



I conclude with the Divine Message the *Son of God* sent to his *Præcursor* in Prison, to confirm the Disciples of the *Baptist*, and to confound the obdurate *Jews*, which with profound Humility, and the greatest Deference imaginable, may be applied to our glorious *Patroness of Wales*, by what you read in this admirable Life; *Go and report that the Blind see, the Lame walk, the Lepers are made clean, the Deaf hear, the Dead rise again, to the Poor the Gospel is preached, St. Mat. xi. 5.* The Omnipotence and Goodness of our great *God* be adored and praised, by all *Angels and Saints*, for ever. *Amen, Amen.*

T H E  
L I T A N I E S  
O F  
St. W E N E F R I D E.

+

**L**ORD have Mercy upon us.  
 Christ have Mercy upon us.  
 Lord have Mercy upon us.  
 God the Father of Heaven have Mercy upon us.  
 God the Son, Redeemer of Mankind, have Mercy upon us.  
 God the Holy Ghost have Mercy upon us.  
 Holy Trinity, One God, have Mercy upon us.  
 Holy *Mary*,  
 Holy Mother of God,  
 Holy Virgin of Virgins,  
 O blessed St. *Wenefride*,  
 O humble and mild Virgin,  
 O glorious Spouse of Christ,  
 O devout and charitable Virgin,  
 O sweet Comforter of the Afflicted,  
 O singular Example of Chastity,  
 O Radiant Star,  
 O fairest Flower of the *British* Nation,  
 O admirable and elected Vessel,  
 O Mirror of Chastity,  
 O Mirror of Devotion,  
 O Mirror of Piety,  
 O bright Lamb of Sanctity,  
 O Golden Image of Angelical Purity,  
 O Hope and Safety of distressed Pilgrims,

Pray for us.

That



That we may be delivered from all Iniquity,  
 That we may be delivered from all disordered Passions of the Mind,  
 That we may be delivered from the Deceits of the World, Flesh, and Devil,  
 That we may be delivered from all Occasions of Sin,  
 That we may be delivered from Plague, Famine, and War,  
 That we may be delivered from the Wrath of God and Eternal Damnation,  
 That we and all Sinners may have true Contrition, and full Remission of our Sins,  
 That all Schismaticks, Hereticks, and Infidels may be converted to the Holy Catholick and Apostolical Faith,  
 That we may always hate Sin, and overcome all Temptations,  
 That we may despise all worldly Vanities and Delights,  
 That we may ever fear God, and fulfil his holy Will,  
 That we may have both spiritual and corporal Health,  
 That we may devoutly affect Chastity and Purity of Life,  
 That we may fervently love Humility and Mildness,  
 That we may delight in pious Prayer, Fasting, and charitable Alms,  
 That we may discreetly and fervently continue in the Exercise of Godliness,  
 That we may chearfully and constantly suffer for the Love of Christ,  
 That the Souls in Purgatory, and all afflicted Persons, may obtain heavenly Consolations,  
 That our Benefactors, and all that labour to save Souls, may be blessed with abundance of Grace, and everlasting Life,  
 That we may enjoy true Peace, and endless Felicity,  
 That God of his abundant Mercy will vouchsafe to bless this our Pilgrimage,  
 That by thy pious Intercession it may be to the perfect Health of our Souls and Bodies,  
 That thou wilt vouchsafe to grant our Requests,  
 O blessed *Wenefride*,

*O holy Virgin and Martyr, pray for us.*

*Let us pray.*

**A**Lmighty and Everlasting God, who hast adorned *St. Wenefrede* with the Reward of Virginity; Grant us, we beseech thee, by her pious Intercession, to set aside the Delights of the World, and obtain with her the Throne of everlasting Glory; through *Jesus Christ* thy Son, who with thee liveth and reigneth in the Unity of the Holy Ghost for ever. *Amen.*

*Another Prayer.*

**A**Lmighty and Everlasting God, we humbly beseech thee, that blessed *St. Wenefrede* may obtain for us such spiritual and temporal Benefits, as are expedient for thy holy Service, and our eternal Salvation; through our Lord *Jesus Christ* thy Son, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth ever one God, World without End. *Amen.*

*The*



*The H Y M N of St. W E N E F R I D E.*

**A**S fragrant Rose in pleasant Spring,  
 To God's own Son a Spouse most dear,  
 And Martyr rare of Christ our King,  
*St. Wenefride* did flourish here.  
 Descended well of *BRITISH RACE*,  
 In Faith was firm, in Hope secure,  
 With holy Works, and Soul in Grace,  
 From worldly Filth preserved pure.  
*Cradock* this Sacred Maid did kill,  
 And him Hell swallowed presently,  
 Where Tears in vain do run down still,  
 'Mongst burning Flames incessantly.  
 A Token sure of this strange Thing,  
 Bspotted all with bloody Red,  
 A Well by God's Command doth spring,  
 Where Tyrant's Sword cut off her Head.  
 Here Wonders great God's Hand doth work;  
 The Blind doth see, the Dumb doth speak,  
 Diseases which in Bodies lurk,  
 Are cured where Faith is not weak.  
 O glorious Virgin *Wenefride*,  
 To us the raging Sea appease,  
 And free us so from Satan's Dread,  
 That he on us may never seize. *Amen.*

*A Prayer to St. W E N E F R I D E.*

**O** Blessed *Wenefride*, O pure Virgin and glorious Martyr, so especially elected, so divinely graced, and wonderfully restored from Death to Life; O singular Hope of all that fly unto thee with full Confidence and Humility; though unworthy, yet we thy devoted Pilgrims make our Addresses unto thee. O Sanctuary of Piety, look upon us with patient Eyes, receive our Petitions, accept our Offerings, and present our Supplications to the Throne of Mercy, that through those thy powerful Intercessions, God will be pleased to bless this our Pilgrimage, and grant us our Request and Desires, through *Jesus Christ* his Son, who with God the Father, and the *Holy Ghost*, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, World without End. *Amen.*

*Another Prayer to St. W E N E F R I D E.*

**O** Blessed *St. Wenefride*, O glorious Virgin and Martyr, who hast admirably beautified with the Purple of thy Blood the rare Purity of thy innocent Life, whom God has so especially chosen, so highly privileged, and so wonderfully restored to Life again, gracing thee with the Honour of a living Martyr, causing a Fountain miraculously to spring, bearing a perpetual Memory of thy Name, for the Relief of all diseased and distressed Pilgrims, who shall devoutly beg thy powerful Intercession. O blessed *St. Wenefride*, hear the Prayers, and receive the humble Supplications of thy poor devoted Pilgrims, and obtain that by thy pious Intercession, God of his infinite Mercy will be pleased to grant us a full Pardon and Remission of our Sins, and a Blessing to this our Pilgrimage; and that we may increase and persevere in God's Grace, and enjoy him eternally in Heaven. This we beg of thee, O blessed Virgin and Martyr, for *Jesus Christ* our Lord and Saviour's Sake. *Amen.*



## St. *BEINO*'s LIFE and MIRACLES.

Translated from the

*B R I T I S H* MS.

**A** Gentleman lived at *Banbenic* in *Powisland*, above the River then called \**Sabrina*, but now *Hafren*. His Name was *Bugu*, and his Wife was *Beren*, Daughter of *Lawden*. It was an innocent and harmless Couple, and obey'd the Commands of God in all things as blameless as they could. And they had no Son. And they were well stricken in Years, having past the best of their Time. And they had lain together for twelve Years without knowing one another, by mutual Consent. And on a Work-day as they talked together, behold an Angel came to them, and his Raiment was as white as Snow, and said to them, Be of good Chear, for God hath heard your Prayers; and the Angel said to the Husband, This Night thou shalt know thy Wife, and she shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and he shall be in Favour both with God and Man. And as the Angel advised so they did, and *Beren* conceived that very Night, and brought forth a Son, and called him *Beino*. And they brought up the young Child at home till he could walk, and then they sent him to a Saint in † *Gwentland*, called *Tangusius*. And his Parents had Divine Directions to dispose of him thus. And with that Saint he lived till, by the Help of God, he had learned all the Holy Bible. There he learned the Service and Orders of the Church, and was ordained Priest. And *Ynyr*, King of *Gwentland*, took notice of him; he was a meek, chaste, and a generous Man, very ready to be advised; he received *Beino* honourably and friendly, gave him a Gold Ring and a Crown, and was a Disciple to and Monk under St. *Beino*; and he gave him three Estates in *Evas*, and the People also in those Divisions with their Goods and Chattels. At that Time *Beino*'s Father was sick, and they despaired of his Life; and he sent a Messenger to his Son *Beino*, and commanded him on his Blessing to come to him. Then *Beino* spoke to his Friends and Disciples, Stay you here in this Place, while I go to see my Father now dying. And so they did. And St. *Beino* recommended them to the King and the Gentlemen of that Country. And he went to the Place where his Father was ill; and his Father, after Communion and Confession, made a good End, and died. Then *Beino* stay'd in his Father's Estate, built a Church there, and dedicated it to our Lord Christ. And he planted an Acorn on the Side of his Father's Grave, which grew to be a great Oak in Height and Compass; and a Branch of that Oak reached to the very Ground, and from the Ground again to the Top of the Tree. And there was a Piece of the Branch in the Ground, and always is. And if an *Englishman* go between this Part of the Branch and the Root of the Tree, he shall suddenly die; but if a *Welshman*, no Harm shall befall him. And when *Beino* had lived a long time in his Father's Township, he left the Place, and he went forwards to *Mawn* the Son of *Brochwel*. He received him very kindly and hospitably; and then *Mawn* gave an Offering to God and *Beino* for his own and his Father's Soul. And on a Work-day, as *Beino* was travelling by the River *Severn*, he could hear the Voice of an *Englishman* hollooming to his Hounds, hunting a Hare on the other Side of the River, crying out as loud as he could, *Kergia, Kergia*, which in his Language was encouraging the Dogs. And when *Beino* heard the Voice of an *Englishman*, he immediately turned back to his Disciples, and bid his Sons put on their Cloaths and Shoes, and leave that Place,

\* *Severn*.

† *Monmouthshire*.



Place, for I hear the Voice of a Man of another Nation t'other Side of the River holloing to his Dogs, who shall conquer this Place, and keep it in their Possession. Then *Beino* spoke to one of his Disciples, named *Ritbolint*; My Son, says he, obey me, I would have thee stay here, and my Blessing be with thee: And I shall leave with thee a Cross I have made myself. And that Disciple received his Master's Blessing, and stay'd there. And *Beino* came to the Disciples at *Myvod*, and there he stay'd with St. *Tyffillio* forty Days and forty Nights. From thence he came to King *Cynan*, the Son of *Brochwel*, and begged of him a Place to pray for his own Soul and those of his Companions: And the King gave him *Gwyddelwern*, a Place that had its Name from the *Irishman* whom *Beino* raised from the Dead there, whose Wife had been the Occasion of his Death; and there *Beino* built a Church. About this Time *Cynan's* Nephews came from hunting, and begged some Meat of him. Then *Beino* commanded his Servants to fetch a Runt from the Mountain, and to kill him, to entertain the Huntsmen that begged Meat of him. And they did so. And the Flesh was put into the Pot to be boiled the third Hour of the Day; and it was in the Pot till the Afternoon, and the Men all the while blowing the Fire under the Pot, and yet the Water was not warm in the Pot, nor had the Flesh changed its Colour. Upon this one of the Laymen said, This Scholar with his Art hath done this, that we might have nothing to eat. And when *Beino* heard this Word fall from his Mouth, Let him be accursed, said he; and he died before the End of that Day. Then *Beino* discoursed with the Sons of that \* *wise Man*, and told them, What your Father has given free to God, will you demand Rent and Service for? May that God whom I serve, and gave me this Grant, cause that none of your Heirs enjoy this, and destroy you from this Kingdom, and an eternal one hereafter. And as *Beino* prayed, so he obtained. Then *Beino* left that Place, and walked on the Side of the River *Dee*, to get a Place to pray to God in. And he found none till he came to *Temic*, the Son of *Elwyd*; and this *Temic* gave *Beino* a Town to inherit for ever; and there *Beino* built a Church, and dedicated it to God. Within a short time *Temic* left this solitary Place to *Beino*. And on a Work-day *Temic* and his Wife went to Church to hear Mass and Sermon from *Beino*, and left his Daughter at home to keep House. And behold she saw the King of that Place coming to the House, whose Name was *Caradoc*. She immediately met him, and was civil to him. He asked where her Father was? She answered, At Church; if you have any Business with him, stay for him, and he will come presently. I will not stay, except you promise to be my Concubine. The Maid answered, I'll not be thy Concubine, for you are King, and descended from Kings, and I am too mean to be your Concubine. But, says she, if you stay till I return from my Chamber, I will do what you please: And under Pretence of going to her Chamber, she fled to the Church where her Father and Mother were. The King perceiving her to fly, pursued her, and overtook her as she was entering the Church-door, and with his Sword struck off her Head into the Church, and the Body fell without. *Beino* and the Father and Mother saw this: And *Beino* looked in the King's Face, and told him, I will beg of God that he spare not thee any more than thou hast spared this good Maid. And in that Instant the King melted into a Pool, and he was no more seen in this World. Then *Beino* took the Maid's Head, and put it on her Body, and spread his own Mantle over the Body, and bid the Father and Mother that lamented over her, be quiet a little while, and leave her as she was till Mass was over. Then *Beino* offered to God; and as soon as Mass was over, the Maid was alive, and she wiped the Sweat off her Face; so God and *Beino* made her full well. Where the Blood fell on the Ground a Fountain arose, which to this Day cures Men and Cattel of their Distempers, and the Fountain was called from the Maid's Name *Winifrid's Well*. And many saw this and believed in Christ:

But

\* *Selyf*.



But the greatest Man that believed was *Cadvan*, King of *North-Wales*, who gave *Beino* a great deal of Land. And when *Cadvan* died, *Beino* went to visit *Cadwallawn*, *Cadvan's* Son, who succeeded him in the Kingdom of *North-Wales*: And *Beino* begged to have the Land *Cadvan* had promised; for he had there no Place to worship God or to dwell in. Then the King gave *Beino* a Place in *Arvon*, called \* *Gwardog*. And *Beino* gave the King a *Gold Sceptre*, that *Cynan*, the Son of *Brochwell*, had given him at his Death, which Sceptre was worth Sixty Cows. And there *Beino* built a Church, and began a Wall about it; and on a Work-day when he was making this Wall, and his Disciples with him, behold they could see a Woman with a young Child in her Arms, begging of *Beino* to bless the Child. Stay, Woman, a little, says *Beino*, till we finish this Work. And the Child cried, and would not be pacified. Then *Beino* asked the Woman why the Child cried? Good Saint, answered the Woman, he has good Reason. What is that Reason, says *Beino*? Why, without doubt the Land which you possess and build upon, says the Woman, is the Inheritance of this Child. Then *Beino* bid his Disciples withdraw their Hands from the Work, while he baptized the Child; and to prepare him his Coach, and we will go with this Woman and her Child to visit the King who gave me this Land. Then *Beino* and his Disciples set out with the Woman and her Child, and came to *Caer* || *Seint* where the King was, now called *Caernarvon*. Then *Beino* spoke to the King ---- Why hast thou given me another Man's Land? Why, says the King, who claims it? The Child, says *Beino*, that is in that Woman's Arms is Heir of this Land. And *Beino* said, Give the Child his Land, and give me other Land in its stead, or return me the Present I gave thee, viz. the Sceptre. But the oppressing and proud King answered, I will not change the Land, and the Present thou gavest me I have given it to another. Then *Beino* was very angry, and told the King, I will beg of God that within a while thou mayest have no Land at all; and *Beino* went off and left him accursed. Now there was one *Gwyddeint*, Cousin German to the King, who followed after *Beino*, and overtook him the other Side of the River *Seint*, where *Beino* sat on a Stone by the River-side, and he gave God and *Beino* for his own Soul and the Soul of *Cadwallawn* his Cousin-German, the Town of *Celynog* for ever, without any Rent or Service accruing out of it, and made a good Title of it; and there *Beino* did many Miracles, by the help of God, which no Man could number. At that Time it happened that one of the Workmen of *Aberfraw* went to the Palace in *Gwent*, and a handsomer Man could not be seen in a Summer's Day. When the Princess in *Gwent* saw him, she fell so deep in Love with him, that she could not be without him: And the King her Father hearing of it, chose rather to give his Daughter to him, than that she should take him herself of her own accord; preferring such a handsome Man and loyal, to be the King's Son, and a Nobleman. In Process of Time the young Man persuaded his Wife to visit his own Country, and they came to a Place called *Pennardd* in *Arvon*, and there they lighted off their Horses and rested; and the Princess his Wife, being weary, fell asleep. While she was sleeping, he began to consider with himself how he must be ashamed in his own Country, having a Wife so nobly descended, and that he had no other way to maintain her but to go to the Works where he got his Livelihood before; and there, by the Devil's Instigation, he cut off her Head with his Sword. He went on his Journey to his own Country with his fine Horses, and Silver, and Gold; and when he came to the King, he bought a Place for himself to be *Steward of the Household*. In the mean time a Shepherd of *Beino's* found out the dead Body, and told *Beino*. And *Beino* came on the Wings of the Wind to the Corpse, and squeezed the Head to the Body, and fell upon his Knees and prayed thus, O Lord, Creator of Heaven and Earth,

who

\* *Gwaell*.

|| *Segontium*.



who knowest all Things, raise this dead Body to Life again: And immediately the Woman was restored to Life, and told *Beino* all that had happened. Then *Beino* spoke to her, Chuse you whether you will go to your own Country, or serve God here. The Woman answered, I chuse to serve God here with you, who raised me from the Dead. And where the Blood fell to the Ground, a clear Fountain did rise, and was called from the Woman's Name *Digiw-well*. And some time after a Brother of the Princess, *Idon*, the Son of *Ynyr* of *Gwent*, came to *Beino* to visit his Sister; and when he came there, he found his Sister with *Beino* serving God. And he asked his Sister whether she would come home? She answered, that she would not leave the Place where she had been raised from the Dead. And when *Idon* saw that he could not prevail with his Sister, he begged of *Beino* to accompany him as far as *Aberfraw*, to petition the King there to compel his Sister's Husband to restore the Horses, Gold, and Silver he had taken from his Sister. And they travelled both together to the King's Palace; and *Idon* soon saw the Man he enquired after, and immediately he drew his Sword, and cut off his Head. Then the King was fore displeased, and ordered the Man that killed his Steward to be apprehended. And *Beino* said, Lay not your Hand upon the Man that came with me. Then the King swore with great Indignation, that he would immediately order the Man to be destroyed, except *Beino* would raise to Life the Man that was killed: And *Beino*, without any Hesitation, trusting in God, raised the Man that was killed to Life again. And the King repented that he had tempted the Saint; and he gave *Beino* the Palace he now lives in, called *Beino*.

Many other things have we omitted to speak of, lest the Book should grow too bulky. Here is only a Taste of *Beino's* Miracles. And no one knows what God has done for *Beino's* Sake, but God alone. And whosoever does Good, it is most certain that God will be his Helper. Every thing that God commanded, *Beino* performed. He gave Meat and Drink to the Hungry and Thirsty, Cloaths to the Naked, Entertainment to Strangers, and he would visit the Sick, and those that were in Prison. He would perform exactly every good thing the holy Scripture commanded. And now *Beino's* Days were at an End, and the seventh Day after *Easter* he could see the Heavens opened, and Angels descending and ascending up again: And then *Beino* spoke; I see, says he, the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and *Peter* and *Paul*, \* *Duidvirion* and *Daniel*, Saints and Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, appearing to me. And I see amongst all these, seven Angels standing before the Throne of the Almighty Father, and all the Fathers of Heaven and Singers, saying, Blessed are they whom thou hast chosen, and taken to thyself to live with thee for ever. I hear the Voice of Almighty Father inviting me, and saying to me, My Son, throw off thy Weight of Flesh from thee; now the Time is come, thou art invited with thy Brethren to the everlasting Feast: Let thy Body remain in the Earth, and let the Host of Heaven, the Angels, carry thy Soul to the Kingdom of Heaven, which thou hast deserved here by thy Works. And now the Day of Judgment will be greater, when the Lord shall speak to his Saints, You blessed Sons of my Father, come to inherit the Kingdom that was prepared for you since the Beginning of the World; where Life shall be without Death, Youth without old Age, Health without Sicknes, and Joy without Sadness. The Saints of the first Degree with God the Father shall be next the Archangels, and the Disciples of Jesus Christ, next to the nine Degrees in Heaven of such as have not sinned; next to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

*Let us now beg the Mercy of God Almighty, through the Assistance of St. Beino, that with him we may enjoy eternal Life, for ever and ever. Amen.*

\* *Druidion.*



*E Cod. MS. in Bibl. Bodl. sup. Art. A, &c. 72. fol. 189. a.*

*Seint Vonefred the holi Virgine.*

- V**Onefred was an holy Mayde, so ich ondirftonde,  
 In the tyme tho Syre *Aleyn* was King of *Ingelonde* :  
 This ilke King was a good Man, so God 3ef the Cas,  
 They his Sone was a Fool, thilke tyme nas  
 5 And that Men seth wel ofte, also thinketh me ;  
 Therefore wel is the Child that may I the be Fadir what he be.  
 This holy Mayde lerned here Byleue tho  
 With a Prest of the Contre, that men cleped *Beuno*.  
 This Mayde he tau3t ever wel to fien al Lecherye,  
 10 And to kepe here Body clene fram Synne and fram Folye.  
 And the Mayde him behet myd good wille tho  
 That 3he wolde clene Mayde byleven everemo.  
 In a tyme hit byfil that the deuel alone  
 Acom, after that here Frenedes to Chirche weren agone.  
 15 The Kinges Sone com to Here in his Rebaudye,  
 And gan here bysechen faste, to don his Lecherye.  
 The Mayde him answered and sayde anon ry3t  
 Ich nam nou3t to ben thin Hore nouthe I dy3t ary3t :  
 Ich wole gone to Boure, and come to The anon,  
 20 And than with my Body thy wil thou my3t done.  
 For 3he wolde ascapye, the Mayde seyde al this,  
 And for 3he nolde nou3t habbe with him to don I wis.  
 Tho 3he was withinne a Dore 3he ondede anon,  
 And suththe toward Chirche wel 3erne 3he gangon.  
 25 Anon tho this fool Child herof the soth isay,  
 That he was bygylid thorow3 that fayre May.  
 And after here wel quickliche anon he gan to go,  
 And anon drou3 out his Swerd tho he com here to.  
 And faste by the Chirche dore he smot of here heved ;  
 30 And thus was this holy Mayde of here Lyf byreved.  
 God cheued anon that this dede was nou3t gode,  
 Therefore with the dede this 3ong Child worth tho wode.  
 In all his woodhede he leste tydes thre,  
 And suththe he deyde fodeynliche, so the Bok telleth me.  
 35 The Devel was tho iredy, and Body and Soule nom,  
 So that no Man nyfte whodyr that he bycom.  
 In the stede that the Mayde so byhevedid was  
 A fwythe fayr Welle anon Sprong bycas.  
 And som men told in suththe that therby tho stode,  
 40 That ther bethin Stonys ispringed al with blode.  
 Ther nys so queinte nother more ne lasse  
 That mowe the blodis dropis fram the Stonys wassche.  
 Ac ech Mon bereth witnesse that hem up nom,  
 That hit is a tokene of here martirdom.



- 45 Tho this holy Prest *Beuno* ihurd of al this fare,  
Sore him of thou3t that he nadde I ben thare:  
And for that hit was nou3t the tyme that 3he cholde ben dede,  
Therefore a Predycacioun to the Peple he hath isede.  
And in his Predycacioun Ich wot he seyde this,  
50 Hit ner nou3t tyme that the Mayde 3it partid fram Us,  
Ac bende wolde that 3he cholde herafter libbe longe,  
And wel fervy Crist, mede to ondirfonge.  
Therefore ich 3ou bidde, that 3e bidde with Me,  
To oure Lord Ihu Crist that is so hende and fre,  
55 That he us sende to day a party of his Grace,  
And arere this Mayde to lyve in this Place.  
The heved to this Body this holy Prest gan don  
And thorw3 his Love and here, that Mayde aros anon.  
Ever therafter aboute here Nekke was as they hit were a Threde  
60 In tokenyng of the marterdom that 3he was onso dede.  
Whyter thing ne my3te be than the Threde was.  
The Peple seyde for joye alle *Deo gratias*  
Thorw3 *Beuno* his rede, abyte suththe 3he nom,  
And ladde swyth hard lif and good Nonne bycom.  
65 *Beuno* in a tyme to here seyde tho,  
*Wonfred*, Ihu Crist it wole that we to party ato.  
For into another Contre nede ich mot wende,  
And there nedis to dwellin to my lyves end.  
Ech 3er thou most sende som presaut, ich the telle,  
70 And what thou wolt me sende cast hit in the Welle.  
Of that thou dost therinne ne drede the ri3t nou3t,  
That hit ne chal thorw3 Goddes grace, to me ben well ibrou3t.  
And after this, Vij 3er hennes, thou chalt fare,  
And thy lyf dayis enden Ich wot elleswhare.  
75 And loke in thyne lyve that thou love Chastede,  
For nedes ich most henne no long ne man ich her be.  
At the Welle I of spake the Mayde tho him brou3te.  
Suththe tornyd here a3en and a Chesible him wrou3te,  
By here my3t 3he hit made both good and ryche,  
80 That nas in all the Londe no Chesible here ilyche.  
Tho hit was iredy, thorw work of here honde,  
In a whit Mantel the Chesible she hit wonde:  
3he leyde hit in the Streme, that 3he ifonde ther,  
And thorw3 Goddes grace the Strem hit forth ber,  
85 Into that ilke selve stede that *Beuno* woned tho.  
And they hit was from the Well thritty myle and mo;  
And therinne my3t wel I se, how good Crist is,  
And that hit was a Merakle eche man may wite, I wis.  
After that the Vij 3er wer ibrou3t to ende,  
90 Nede moste *Wonfred* to other Stede wende.  
And for *Beuno* the holy Prest hit had I seyd before,  
Nede most these wordis to soth ben I core.  
Thennes for to wende 3he gan her dy3te I wis,  
Into a swythe wilde Stede that *Veterat* icleped is.



95 Bothe Monkes and Nonnes this Mayde ifounde tho,  
That ladden good lyve, and clene ; so ech man au3t to do.  
*Bulopius* het the Abbot that here Mayster was there,  
Swythe moche he dede his Wille his Monkes for to lere.

A Modir hadde this Abbot that him to man bare,  
100 Mayster of the Nonnes Ich wot that 3he was thare.  
By here ry3t name Men cleped here *Eusebie*  
For moche 3he hatyed Sinne and loved Cortesie.  
Therfore Women drou3 to here both for and ner,  
For in alle the Londe 3he ne hadde no Per.

105 Thorw3 red of the Abot *Wonefred* to here drou3  
Eyther of other is Felechipe was tho glad inou3.

After that *Euzebye* partyd of this lyve,  
*Wonefred* dwelled in here Stede 3eres ten and fyve.  
Mek 3he was, and of fayr Speche, and fwyth mylde of mode,  
110 And thorw here holy Speche 3he brou3te Mony to Gode.  
Suththe tho God sent his Grace, to Heven 3he gan wende,  
Now Ihu for the love of Here, thedir us bringe at oure ende. *Amen.*

SINCE the printing off a great Part of this Book, I have seen (by the Favour of *Roger Gale*, Esq; the worthy Son of a most learned Father, the late *Dean of York*) another MS. *Life of Wenefrede*, which was, I guess, taken out of *Rob. Salop.* but has none of his Preface, differs very much in many Places, is much shorter, and leaves off entirely at the Death of *Theonia* ; as does the old *English Legend*, and this *Life in Verse*, which I guess to be about 400 Years old. Some of whose Words I have tried to explain, but many more I understand not. According to this above-mentioned MS. *Wenefrede's Day* is the 22d of *June*.

*Abyte*, Habit of a Nun.

*Ascapye*, to escape.

*Behet*, promised.

*Bidde*, pray.

*Byleven*, to live.

*Ch.* for Sh. v. 31, 47.

*Fare*, go away.

*Flen*, to flee.

*Fool*, foul.

*Gangon*, went.

3 for g, v. iii; for y, xxxii; for gh, ix; for s, xii.

*3ern*, carefully, diligently.

*Het*, was called.

*Hende*, gentle, good.

*Hit*, it.

I, added to a Word, makes it signify no more than it did before: *Ifay*, saw; *iredy*, ready; *ispringed*, sprinkled; *iburd*, heard; *idy3t*, decked.

*Ich*, I.

*Ilk*, the same.

*Libbe*, live. The *v* was written like a *b*.

*Myd*, with.

*Nom*, took; to *nim* is to steal.

*Queint*, neat, curious.

*Nas*, was not; *nam*, am not; *nold*, would not; *nyft*, wist not; *nadde*, had not.

o for u, v. i.

*Rebaudie*, obscene Talk.

*Stede*, Place.

*Tho*, when, and then.

*They*, altho'.

*Wend*, go.

*Woned*, dwelt.

*Worth tho wode*, for, grew mad.

## A FUNERAL



A F U N E R A L  
S E R M O N  
U P O N  
Mr. N O B L E.

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2 S A M U E L, Chap. XII. Ver. 5.

*And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.*

**A**FTER *David* had debauched the Wife, and killed the Husband, he lay, for ought that appears, at least ten Months in a profound Security; and slept in Death and unrepented Sins, in Murder and Adultery, both of them aggravated with the foulest Circumstances those Sins can well admit of. Where is the Man, that, in the Book of *Psalms*, appears so tender, that he can hardly bear even his own weak Reasonings, and the Disorder of his own Thoughts? The Man that was disturbed by every little Breath of Wind, now snores upon the Top-mast in a Tempest; as if light Offences, like light Sorrows, were loud and querulous, and great and fearful Sins did stupify and keep the Conscience silent. The Scriptures speak so kindly of this Prince, that People think he was only faulty in the Matter of *Uriah*. That is not literally and exactly true, but it signifies that this was the great and lasting Blemish of his Life; and yet this Spot continued long, without so much as his endeavouring to wash it out by his Repentance and Confession; and might perhaps have staid much longer on, had not God, in Mercy to him, sent a holy Man to shew him this dishonourable Stain, and shame him into an Acknowledgment of that Sin; which, because he had committed it in secret, and had not since thought upon it, he might imagine God had forgotten, or had never seen it. He talks of some that reasoned at that rate (in the *Psalms*) and he seems himself to have reasoned little better, if we may guess of it by this strange Negligence and Insensibility, in which he lay so long, and slept so soundly. From this most dangerous Security it pleased God, at length, to awaken him, not with his Thunder, but a still and gentle Voice uttered by *Nathan*, as if the coming on his Heart too angry and quick, might have confounded and dismayed him quite. He tells him of an Act of huge Oppression, Cruelty, and Injustice, committed by a rich and powerful Man upon his poor and helpless Neighbour; who, being to entertain a Stranger-Guest, spared his own Flocks and Herds, which were without Number or Distinction, and would needs kill the single Lamb, that was the whole Stock and Treasure, and Delight of his poor Neighbour: And when *David* heard this, *His anger was greatly kindled against this rich man, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die; i. e.* he is worthy of Death, or deserves to die: For the Law was not so, that Theft or Violence, though pitiless and cruel, should be punished with Death; but the guilty Party was to restore sometimes two-fold, sometimes four, sometimes five,



and seven, according to the Quality of the Thing or Creature stolen by him. But here, the Insolence and want of Pity joined to the violent Injustice of taking away a Creature that was all the Estate, and all the Pleasure of this poor Man, raised his Offence, and *David's* Anger, to such a Pitch, that he expresses rather what such a Crime deserved, than what the Law would punish it with. Let us therefore see, what Uses we may make of this Relation, and the Judgment *David* passed on this Occurrence. And first, we may observe, that he altogether condemns the Injustice and the Cruelty of this rich Man; and, secondly, we may see, that the Way to pass a true Judgment on any Occasion, is to be one's self wholly disinterested, and to remove the Cause to another Person: Which was the Method *Nathan* here took, to bring *David* to a Sense and Acknowledgment at first, and then to the Condemnation and Repentance of his Sin. First, The Cruelty and Injustice of this rich Man is here condemned: *As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die, or is worthy of Death; and he shall restore fourfold, because he had no pity.* The Rich are Masters of more than the Poor are; but the Poor have as much Right to what they have as the Richest can have, and therefore it is equally unjust to take from either; but because a little taken from the Poor, who have but little, leaves them quite destitute and naked, the same Injustice done to them is raised to Cruelty, because they suffer more by it, which would be Injustice only, were the Party injured rich. Laws indeed cannot well consider this, because they have no respect to Persons, nor consider Men as good or bad, rich or poor, high or low, but as lawful Possessors of their Goods, whether more or less; and therefore they regard not what is *left*, but what is *lost*; nor how able a Man is to bear his Losses, but the Right he had to keep his own. But all these Things come into Consideration, when private People judge of Matters of Fact; and though no Circumstances can make Injustice more unjust, yet they add Hardship and Sufferings, and make Injustice more or less cruel; and because the *Malignity* of Offences does most especially consist in the Mischief that is suffered by them, a Man will always be more ready to condemn a Violence offered to the Poor, than to the Rich, because the Poor are more mischieved by it, and suffer more by such Injustice, and because our Pity will consider what is *left* more than what is *lost*. So that had this rich Man in the Parable taken away a Lamb with the same Violence from a rich Neighbour, with which he took it from his poor one, he had committed the same Injustice that he here did; but that Injustice had not been so cruel nor so faulty, because not so hard and mischievous. This must not be so mistaken, as if it were a less Sin to rob the Rich than it is to rob the Poor; for the Sin of Injustice is the same, and consists of depriving a Man of what is his by Right; but that he who robs the Poor adds great Cruelty to his Injustice, which is another Sin. But in this, as generally in all other Injustices committed by the Rich against the Poor, there was also Insolence and much Oppression. These are great Temptations, and always in the Way of powerful wealthy People, who, if they also happen to be hard or covetous, do seldom miss of falling under them. The Pride and Lordliness of great Men makes them sufficiently negligent of all the Forms of Justice; but when the Love of Money also takes them, then are they always ready for Oppression. Now every body sees the Wickedness of this, that they who are rich should spare themselves, and feed upon the Poor, and they who are Powerful should oppress the Helpless. All Power is to be exercised to the Good and Profit of Mankind; that's the Power of God, and all that would be like him; the Power of the Devil is still employed in doing Mischief, and whoever so uses his Power, is imitating that bad Spirit, and perverting the Means provided by God for the Benefit of the World. 'Tis a strange Thing that great and wealthy People should not have more Regard to Justice than other Folks, because they are so much greater Gainers by it; they have more to lose, and have consequently more preserved and secured to them by Law and Justice than other People have, and therefore



therefore should, of all things in the World, honour and keep them most exactly. For what would become of all their Wealth and Greatness, if the Poor, setting them before them for Example, should think of dispensing for a while with Law and Justice, and fall to forcing of their Flocks and Herds, and drive them to their Cottages? So that if neither Justice, Generosity, nor Pity will restrain Men from invading others Rights, and oppressing the Poor, their very Gratitude to the Laws, and the Fears of other People's being as regardless of Justice as themselves, might do it. These People should consider, that by such Violence and Oppression they overthrow their own Security, and undermine the very Ground they stand upon; for if Law and Justice should not still be uppermost, what could secure their Riches and their Honours? How would they be distinguished from the Crowd of poor and common People? Oppression therefore is a very hateful Sin, because it abuses the Power that is given for the Security and Benefit, to the Mischief, of Mankind, just contrary to the Purpose and Design of God in placing it in their Hands; and very ungrateful in neglecting *That*, which only can secure and preserve them; and very blind withal, in shewing the Way to others, to break up all Inclosures, destroy Property, and lay all Things common, and bring Men back to a State of War; for all this Injustice and Oppression do in Effect and Truth. But the Offence of this rich Oppressor in the Parable is also aggravated, by considering the Affection the poor Man had for his single little Creature, and the Tenderness with which he cherished it. His Loss was raised by the Value he had set upon it, whether wisely or no; and Grief is always proportioned to what we ourselves think we lose, and not to the Reason or Opinion of other People. Justice, indeed, can take no Notice of this, because that Fancy (which is under no Rule) is the Mother of such Affections, and because no private Esteem, or Love, adds any true Worth to Objects in the Consideration of the Publick: But private Reason will see, that the more we love any thing, the greater Pain it is to part with it; and therefore that he who knowingly deprives another of what he values highly and loves tenderly, does certainly do him more Mischief, and occasions him greater Sorrows, than the bare Loss would do, without that Kindness and Affection for it. This is the Case of an unjust and pitiless Oppression supposed in the Parable, and condemned by *David* presently, as it needs must be by every body else that considers things rightly. All Men would say, that such an Act deserved great Punishment. Let us see, in the next Place, to the Thing intended by this Parable, the Matter of *Uriah* the *Hittite*, whether that were any thing better: The Husband was honourably employed in fighting for his King and Country, and the King in the mean time corrupts his Wife; and to enjoy her quietly and without Disturbance, contrives his Death, by setting him in the Place of Danger, and then deserting him so that he must needs perish. *David* is, in this Parable, *the rich Man* that had many Flocks and Herds, because he had many Wives and Concubines: *Uriah* is the *poor Man*, who had but one, whom he loved most tenderly, *i. e.* *Bathsheba* his Wife. The *Stranger-Guest* that came unto the rich Man, was the *new Fire* that was kindled in *David's* Bosom, the unlawful Passion he conceived for *Bathsheba*, that vagrant Lust that came and took up its Rest and Habitation with him; the Entertainment of *this Traveller*, was the Satisfaction of this Appetite. The Iniquity was, that he spared to take of his own Abundance, and needs would rob *Uriah* of his sole and single Treasure, on which he had placed his Heart, and with whom he had lived most happily. The Murder of *Uriah* is not touched on in the Parable, but it is in the Application, as an Effect of his unlawful Passion; and indeed it is a frequent Effect of such criminal Engagements; People are so besotted as to think of saving themselves from Shame or Punishment, or both, by venturing upon other Wickedness, equal at least, and sometimes greater than the principal and first. Our Courts of Justice see these Reasonings and these



these Consequences often; that's the Security that Sin continually proposes; *this* Crime will save you from the Punishment of *that*; if you would not endure the Dishonour of Whoredom, you must strangle the Infant; if you would not be accounted a Robber, and treated as such, you must make sure Work, and kill the Passenger; if you are false to your Husband's Bed, and fear his Vengeance, or if you like another Partner in the Way of Marriage, the Way is open to your Escape and Satisfaction by many secret Instruments of Death and Dispatch: These Advices meet our Observations frequently, and People's Fear counsels them as fatally as their keenest Rage and Anger. Lust is a very blind impetuous Passion, and as it does itself always mistake its Object, and fix on what is forbidden by Reason, as well as God's Command, so it does truly make Men think so fillily, imagine so vainly, reason so untowardly, and contrive so weakly, and fall into such absurd Commissions, that hardly any other Passion equals it in Folly and Miscarriage: But, above all, 'tis fruitful of wicked Devices, and takes most deadly Resolutions, either to secure its sinful Pleasures, or revenge its Sights and Disappointments. And it were well if People, who are apt enough to remember the Fall of *David* into Murder and Adultery (to keep themselves a little in Countenance) would profit themselves a little more of his Example, and remember how this Murder followed this Adultery, and how easily and commonly one Sin seems to call for another, without intending any such Matter. *David* (one may well presume) having in an unwary Hour discovered and fallen in Love with *Bathsheba*, intended and desired only to satisfy that unlawful Passion; but when he had done that, she sent him Word in a little time, that their adulterous Theft could not lie long concealed from the Eyes of all the World, by Tokens not to be avoided: Her Husband was in the Camp, and therefore *David* sends immediately for him, in order, by this Visit, to cover both their Shame and Sin; but the Man was obstinate, and resolved not to see his Wife, and gave such a Reason for it, in the xith Ch. and 11th Ver. that might have shamed a noble and virtuous Prince to Death: But *David* was not now the Man he used to be, his Soul was now debased to the last Degree, and he betook himself to Shifts unworthy of a Man of Honour, or common Honesty: He fell so low as to make *Uriah* drunk, thinking that in the Rage, or the Forgetfulness of Wine, he might have hastened home; but nothing moved him from his Purpose, and therefore *David* resolved upon his Death, which he effected in the Manner related in the xith Chapter, offering up the Life of a brave Soldier, to his vile Love, and to the Fears of a Discovery. Thus you see how one Sin engages in another; and I believe 'tis rarely known, that the adulterous Falseness of a Wife or Husband ends in that single Injury. And therefore though the principal Design of this Parable was, to set forth the great Injustice of Adultery itself, yet since it is so frequently attended with other Mischiefs, and was in *David's* Case in particular, it may not have been out of the way to have reminded you of the usual Consequences of giving way to such unlawful Affections. Let us see a little to the Original of these Mischiefs, and to the Fountain of these corrupt Streams. I do not intend to insist much upon God's first Peopling the World with *two* Persons only, and they both of them at full Age; nor on his Preservation of *four* Women, each to her Husband only, from the *Flood*, when the World was to be peopled a second time, and after 1500 Years Experience. Those are unanswerable Proofs of God's intending one Man for one Woman, whatever Remissions he might afterwards be pleased to make of this primary Appointment. These Instances are especially directed against the Multiplicity of Wives; which though it were allowed, yet would Adultery be never the less injurious, because it is invading another's Right; and in Countries where Men think they have a Right to many Wives, and actually marry many (in their Way) they think themselves as much injured and as much dishonoured, when any one of them is false or corrupted,



corrupted, as others do when their sole and single Choice (in Christian Countries) forsakes her Marriage-Bed, or Loyalty: So that had *Uriah* violated any one of *David's* many Wives, it had been as much Adultery as *David's* was with *Bathsheba*, his only one. The Injury had been the same to *David* with respect to that particular Wife, and to the Children born of her, that it was to *Uriah*. The Difference was, that *David* shewed a more extraordinary unbridled Fury, that was not to be kept, it seems, in any Bounds; a fearful Degree of Looseness, amidst such Liberties as Custom had indulged to *Eastern Princes*! But nothing lawful pleases Men given up to that mad Passion. Let us see to the Injuries of Adultery, in a few Words, without concerning ourselves with more or fewer Wives permitted to one Man. *First*, That Union of Affection, without which Marriage is the greatest Burden in the World, is utterly broken off; that which every one desires, expects, and solemnly contracts for, is hereby lost: There is no such Thing as Love without Fidelity. When either Party once grows false, the utmost Good that is to be expected, is but a formal cold Civility, a Thing that no one values where sincere Affection is both due and looked for. I speak not now of what the giddy, careless, covetous, ambitious People do; but 'tis sure that wise considering People, who think of being easy under Marriage, will never hope to be so without both loving and being beloved of their Partner, which is impossible to happen where either of them proves false; and therefore to corrupt the Partner of one's Bed, does apparently destroy that Happiness that every honest one proposes and expects to find in Marriage, and thereby does the greatest Injury he can. The Affection of the Mind it is, that best discharges the Duty of each Relation; and therefore he who alienates that Affection, hinders the Duty often from being discharged at all, but always takes away the Joy and Comfort of it, and pays the Relation with meer shew and Ceremony. Thus it is with Children and their Parents, Masters and Servants, Prince and Subject; persuade them not to love each other, and they will very ill, if at all, discharge their several Duties: But above all Relations in the World, 'tis so especially with Man and Wife; take off the Affection there, and all its Pleasure and Comforts are at an End: All that is left, is Burden and Misfortune. This shews us, that Adultery troubles the Peace of human Life, and separates the closest Union and Society, and is as mischievous as any other Crime whatever. *Secondly*, Married People have such a Propriety in each the other's Person, that it is not to be communicated: They are so much each other's, that they are not properly their own, and much less can they be any one's besides; even the Consent of both Parties can give no Right to any Third, to either's Person; they have so stipulated and contracted with each other for the Power of each other, that no After-consent can part with it. So that had *Uriah* been consenting to *Bathsheba*, and she herself had gone willingly to *David*, the Man and Woman had done an Act void in itself, and *David* had been notwithstanding guilty of Adultery; because the first Contract took away all future Power of making the like with any other, whilst they who made it lived: That alone dissolves the Contract, which, had it been supposed, would have hindered it from being made, *i. e.* Falseness and Looseness. And 'tis upon this Ground alone, that human Laws have any Power to dissolve Matrimonial Bonds, that were lawfully made at first: No Convenience nor Inconvenience is to come into Consideration, but Virtue only; if neither Party hath forfeited the Right they had to each other, by giving themselves into the Power of any other Person, there can be no Divorce or Dissolution of that Bond. This shews that the Right which results from the Matrimonial Contract is stronger, if it may be, than any other Right whatever, being unalterable, and never to be transferred, but by the Death of either Party. Now as great as the Right is, so great is the Wrong done by Adultery, which is the Invasion and Subversion of it; and therefore 'tis a mighty Piece of Injustice that is done by these



unwarrantable Liberties; 'tis robbing Men of what is given them in the firmest and most solemn Manner that can be, by all the Laws of God and Man. *Thirdly*, This Injustice draws after it many more Injustices, by the Confusion and Disorders it occasions in Mens Families, by bringing in spurious Children, and causing Men to bestow their Affection, Care and Pains, in cultivating Plants that belong not to them, and leaving them the Fruits of all their Labours and Inheritance, which is to the Wrong also of those who are the true Heirs. I mention not here the Shame and Grief (which are also great Injuries) that these Violations of the Marriage-Bed occasion, not only to the injured Party, but to all the innocent Relations, who are thereby covered with Confusion. Enough is said to shew, that the corrupting another's Wife or Husband is a great Piece of Injustice, and an Offence equally mischievous to Mankind, with any other; and therefore to be equally condemned with the pitiless, unjust Oppression of the rich Man in *Nathan's* Parable, taking away the single Treasure and Delight of his poor Neighbour. The Love that a good and virtuous Man is presumed to have for his Wife, answers to the Fondness the poor Man here had to the Creature he had cherished and brought up so tenderly; the Right each had to what he loved, is the same. Proportioned to the Love is the supposed Concern and Grief a Man would have, to have the Object of it torn away from him by Violence, or seduced by the as violent Temptations of Riches, Honours and great Pleasures, to the Arms of a Stranger. This Resemblance is enough to make the Parable intelligible and applicable; and he who would condemn the cruel Robbery of this rich Oppressor, would as certainly condemn the adulterous Violation of *Uriah's* Bed. The Injustice and the Cruelty were equally great in both. *Nathan* designed by one to shadow out the other; and *David* says of himself, in the rich Man, *The man that hath done this thing deserves to die*. The *Jewish* Law did not, as we have seen, condemn such Theft to Death, but to ample Restitution; 'twas an Excess of *David's* Pity and Displeasure, that moved him to pronounce this cruel Oppressor deserved to die. But the *Jewish* Law did expressly adjudge the Adulterer and the Adulteress to Death; and this obtained to our Saviour's Days, as appears by the malicious and designing *Jews* bringing before him a Woman taken in Adultery, whom *Moses* in his Law commanded to be stoned: And for ought one knows, the Decision of our Saviour might determine Christian Lawgivers in future Times, to inflict a lesser Punishment than Death upon Adulterers; for tho' some Christian Nations have punished the Offence with Death, yet generally it has been otherwise; and I think, no Nation does at this Day, in the Christian World, pursue that Crime to that Extremity. Not that the Christian Doctrine gives any Encouragement to such Liberties, for it has them in the greatest Abhorrence in the World; the Scriptures declare against them in most ample Terms, denounce the Wrath of God against them, and tell us *God will judge Adulterers*, and utterly exclude them from Heaven, without particular Repentance; and the Discipline of the Church pursued this Sin with such Severity in this World, that one may see they held no Sin to exceed it in Wickedness. Nor can we find that it is less pernicious to the Peace and Quiet, the Order and good Government of Mankind, than other Offences which are constantly adjudged to be worthy of Death. The Confusion of Families does not, indeed, seem to be so mischievous to other Nations as to the *Jews*, where the nice Distinction of Tribes was to serve, as to other Purposes, so especially to the surer Knowledge and Discovery of the promised Seed, the *Messiah* of the Tribe of *Judah*, which Certainty would be destroyed by the Indulgence of such promiscuous Conjunctions; and therefore to guard against such Mischief, the *Jews* were deterred by the Fears of certain Death to both the guilty Parties. The faithful Chastity of the married Couple resembling also the pure Service of one God, as the Pollutions of adulterous Mixtures did the Worship of many Deities among the Gentiles, might also  
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be a Reason, why God, to shew his Jealousy, and the Abomination he had Idolatry in, might punish Adultery with Severity, somewhat beyond what other Lawgivers thought fit. Excepting these two things, it will be hard to find a Reason why Adultery should be punished with Death among the *Jews*, and not among the Christians; or rather, why it should not be punished with Death among the Christians, as it was among the *Jews*. If our Saviour's Decision hath inclined any one to condemn this Offence with less Severity than before, 'tis a Mistake that hath shewn more Respect than Judgment: For certainly our Saviour does not there determine as a Magistrate, for then Adultery should deserve no Punishment at all, but *to go home and sin no more*, a thing that no body will venture to say. But thus it was, they who came to him with this Woman, came tempting him, that they might, from his Answer, have somewhat to accuse him of. The Law of *Moses* punished Adultery with Death; but the *Romans*, in whose Power they were, would not allow them to put that Law in Execution: If Christ therefore adjudge the Adulterers to Death, then they delate him to the *Roman Magistrate* as seditious, and one that would excite the *Jews* to assert their Liberty, and execute the Laws of *Moses*, as they should: If, according to his wonted Clemency, and as they expected, he should judge this Offence not to be worthy of Death, then would they represent him as a Blasphemer of the Law of *Moses* to the People, and so create him Ill-will on that Part, and Danger enough from such as were nicely jealous of the Honour of their Law-giver, and sate very uneasy under the *Romans*, who suspended the Execution of what Laws they pleased that related to the Publick. Our Saviour, aware of their Design, determines the Matter so as to avoid offending them on either Hand: He undertakes not to judge whether *Moses's* Law were reasonable or not, nor whether the *Jews* should execute such Law in Opposition to the *Romans*, or rest content with the Suspension it was under from their Force; but he puts their Zeal upon a Trial that would cover them with Confusion: *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*. You private Men come here to me, a private Man, to determine a Cause already determined by *Moses*, as to what *might* be done, and by the *Romans*, as to what *is* to be done. 'Tis well, perhaps, for most of you, that such a Law as this is tied from hurting you; but however, if your Zeal be offended at this Restraint, and you think that Chastity and Virtue are hereby too much discouraged, let them who are intirely innocent take upon them the Place and Office of Witnesses, as *Moses* appointed, *and let them cast the first stone at her*. This is a plain Way to avoid the Snare that was laid for him, and cannot be the Decision of a Law-giver; for publick Magistrates do not use to acquit guilty People, for the Faults of Accusers and Witnesses; because guilty People are punished for their Guilt, and because they deserve it, which they may do as well when their Accusers are equally guilty with them, as when they are altogether innocent. If unoffending People only must be Witnesses and Executioners, Offenders would be, generally, out of Danger. And as to what our Saviour says of the Woman herself, when left alone with him, --- *Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more*; it only signifies, that he would not take upon him the Office of a Magistrate, who was a private Man. But that which belonged to him, as a Prophet and Servant of God, that he performed, and that was to bid her repent, and live in Chastity for the future. So that from what our Saviour says on this Account, no Relaxation of the *Jewish* Law can be concluded; he seems to say nothing to that Matter. But what he says to her, he says to all who have been guilty of the like Offence, *Neither do I condemn you, but go, repent, and sin no more*; and this he speaks, not with respect to any national Laws, (which may punish this Offence with Death, if they see fit, or with a lesser Punishment) but with respect to the Laws of God, and to the Judgment of the other World. The Laws of God do  
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certainly adjudge Adulterers to everlasting Death, (as we have seen before) that is the standing Rule of Justice; but Mercy, like the *Roman Power*, suspends the Execution of it; and Christ, in the mean time, interposes Pardon upon Conditions, *Go and sin no more*: This Goodness of God is to lead Men to Repentance. I do not condemn thee, saith our Lord to the Adulterers; but neither doth he acquit her, *i. e.* with relation to temporal Punishment from the Laws; but he condemns Adultery, every where, till Men repent of it, and mend; and then it is, ---- *Neither do I condemn thee*; or, to encourage thee to leave this wicked Practice, *Repent and sin no more*, and I (to whom all Judgment is committed by the Father) will not condemn thee for what is past. And this was the Condition upon which the Prophet so soon pronounced the Pardon of *David* upon Confession of his Sin: *I have sinned*, saith *David*, v. 13. *against the Lord*; and *Nathan* said to *David*, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die*. Is it not very happy for us, that we have to deal with God rather than Man? *The man that hath done this thing shall surely die*, swore *David*, presently, upon the hearing his Offence: The Man that hath done this thing shall live, and shall not die, saith God immediately, upon Confession and Repentance. Who would be backward to confess their Sins to God, who knows them better than ourselves, and has more Mercy for us, than either Reason or the Laws will let us have for one another? It has not been amiss observed, that *David*, in this Condemnation, was the Voice of the *Law*, awarding Death immediately to Sin; and *Nathan* the Voice of the Gospel, proffering Life and Pardon to the Confession and Repentance of it. And this is certain in our Lord's most merciful and gracious Covenant, that not a Soul who will apply this Remedy shall die: For as these horrible Offences committed by *David*, make him a sad Example of the Weakness and wicked Disposition of human Nature, without the Grace of God preventing and assisting us, and evermore concurring with our greatest Care and Watchfulness; so the Forgiveness of them in this speedy Way, is to teach us never to despair of God's Mercies, provided we confess our Sins with all Contrition and Humility, repent in earnest of them, and forsake them.

Other Uses remain to be made of these Words, but I have been too long already for one Time: And the Application is so easy, that I dare say I am prevented in it. I cannot have been speaking, all this while, of *David's* Adultery and Murder, but you must needs have had your Heads filled with the dreadful Instance of them both, in a much meaner Man, whom the Justice of God hath overtaken, in your Sight; and, by the righteous Sentence of a most excellent and upright Magistrate, hath called to Death with Infamy in this World, and to appear before his terrible Tribunal in the next, to answer for those crying Sins. My Heart was full of Pity, and my Eyes of Tears, upon that Day; but was glad to hear my People flocked in so great Numbers to that Execution; and glad it happened on a Day, when Business and Mens Trade and Livelihood would cause them to resort that Way, as well as Curiosity and sad Concern. May God, said I, give to that great Offender, the Grace of true Contrition and Repentance first, and then the Wisdom and the Happiness of so expressing it by proper Words and Gestures, that every single Creature of that Multitude may reap some Benefit by that Example! Strike, Lord, upon the Hearts of every Man and Woman in that great Assembly, that they may find those Feelings and Affections, that are suitable to their Condition and their spiritual Wants, raised in them. I know not if my Prayers were heard; but you could hardly see that *Sight*, and know the Story that occasioned it, without revolving in your Minds a Multitude of Thoughts that would most easily rise upon it. You could not, I am sure, come home, without considering what a Train of Mischiefs a lawless and unbridled Lust draws after it, how great Misfortunes generally attend the Marriages which Riches and Convenience make, without a due Regard to Love, or to the Virtue, Health and Temper,  
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and good Qualities, or Fame and Reputation of the Parents, or the Partners: How short the Passage is from an Indifference to a Slight, from a Slight to a Contempt, and from Contempt to Hatred, of a Wife or Husband; and consequently, how much Care, Good-nature, and Discretion, will be needful to preserve and cherish that Affection in one's own, and in each other's Heart, that is to make the married State easy and happy. How many thousands make their Lives most miserable, for want of that Indulgence, that Allowance and Forgiveness of each other's Indiscretions, Oversights, and Faults, which they are ready, in Good-nature and Good-breeding, to give to all the World besides! Nor should I mention this, but that I see 'tis in the Power of a world of little trifling Accidents to disengage and alienate the Hearts of Wives and Husbands from each other, which often ends in scandalous and sinful Liberties on one or other Side, and fills the House with Infamy and Misery; and frequently provokes the Wrath of God to shew itself in some most exemplary Vengeance. You could not help observing to each other, whilst you were talking on the Way, how sad a thing it was to see a lively well-looking Man cut off untimely, in a Moment, in the full Strength and Vigour of his Age, defeating all his Parents and Relations Hopes, and Cares, and Charges in his Education, and filling them instead with Shame and Sorrows inexpressible, and never ceasing. Who can conceive those Sorrows? What but Death can put an End to them? And this occasioned by another's Death, the Murder of an innocent unhappy Man, cut off untimely in a Moment also, and God knows how prepared for such a sudden Call to Judgment; filling another House and Family with equal Sorrows also, but yet without the Shame, which makes that Cup abundantly less bitter; and both these People brought to their untimely Ends *by the means of a whorish woman, whose house was literally the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death, Prov. vii. 27.* What was your Mind, when all these Thoughts came crowding on together? You did not, I dare say, believe the shameless false Adulteress, *who forsook the guide of her youth, and forgot the covenant of her God,* was any ways less faulty, or less odious in his Sight, than he who suffered Death for murdering of her Husband, altho' the Laws have not as yet overtaken her; which she has Reason to fear they will some time or other do, by some new Crime, unless the Grace of God make her Conversion and Repentance as exemplary, as her perjurious Violation of her Marriage Vows hath made her infamous. And as you could not escape making these Reflections, or the like, upon *that Sight*, so I will hope you made the proper Use of them; calling your own Ways to Remembrance, and either thanking God for his restraining Grace, that hath given you a purer Heart and cleaner Hands, and kept you entire from those Defilements; or praising him for having delivered you from the Power of such impure Habits, as tended naturally, and might have brought you easily into the like abominable Commissions with this unhappy Pair: Or begging earnestly the Assistance of his holy Spirit, to rescue you immediately from the Captivity of Sin, in which you are still held, and forming thereupon the strongest and sincerest Resolutions of breaking off those wicked Courses, avoiding that ensnaring Company, retrenching that Excess of Meats and Drinks, abstaining from those joyous Feasts of Musick, Song, or Dance, or any thing besides that you remember to have fanned or fed those Fires within, that have consumed your Virtue, and been at any time an Occasion of your falling into Sin. Even Liberties that have sometimes been innocent to yourselves, and are, and may be, always so to others, must yet be shunned and let alone by you, if you have found your Reason and Religion have been mastered by them. No one can safely measure his Strength either of Body or Mind, but by Experience and Success; and therefore nothing can be innocent that hurts, no Enemy be held contemptible, that brings us into Bondage.



And as I hope you reasoned thus, and made these Resolutions for yourselves, so I must tell you, Friends, you are obliged to do, each for your Partners, for your Children, your Relations, Servants and Dependants, and all for whom you are concerned, in their distinct Degrees and Measures. Give them good Instructions, give them good Examples; preserve your Interest with them by the former, and your Authority over them by the latter. Never put it out of your Power to admonish and reprove them for their Offences, for fear of being reproached with the like yourselves. Say what you will, the Liberties they see you take, will be the Lessons they will soonest learn, if Inclination lead that Way. I would I could tell what to say, to impress these things most deeply on your Minds, or even to preserve the Impressions that are already made, by what you have heard and seen so lately. I trust them to the Grace of God, and make an End, with Hope that when you hear us, in his Name, pronounce those two Commandments, *Thou shalt do no Murder*, and *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, you will pray with more Attention, and more Fervency, than usually you do, *Lord have Mercy upon us, and incline our Hearts to keep these Laws.*



T H E  
 Counsellor's P L E A  
 F O R T H E  
 D I V O R C E of Sir G. D. and Mrs. F.

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To the R E A D E R.

**T**HE following Plea is to be understood as written by a Gentleman of the Law, very knowing in his own Profession, but more conversant in Church-Writers than Lawyers generally are, or used to be: This made him more careful to observe what became of the Bill of Divorce, which was lately brought into the House of Lords, on the Behalf of Sir G. D. and Mrs. F.; and he used such Means as to get to be present, and to hear whatever was said for or against that Bill, from the bringing it in, to the dismissing it. We who were his Friends, and knew the Calmness and the marvellous good Temper of the Man, were much surprized to find him return from Westminster, one Night, in such a fretful ill Mood, that we could hardly get a good Look from him, tho' he loved us all. At last he told us that the Bill of Divorce was thrown out; and then we found the Occasion of his Sullenness, upon which we rallied him handsomly, and provoked him, all we could, to tell us how things had gone. But all we could get from him, was, "Learn to declaim, Friends, learn to declaim; mind not Reasoning close; nor be concerned for Consequences; get some good Words in your Mouths, and use them often; Eyes, and Hands, and devout Shrugs, will do more Service than you think for." This put us so in mind of Prince Hamlet's way of Talking, in the Play, that we all of us burst into Laughing, and brought our Friend into the same Fit with us. But this Effect it had, that when he was come to himself, he was persuaded by the Company to make a Plea, upon such Topicks as he thought would have been proper for that Great Assembly, where the Cause was to be agitated: And we gave him a Fortnight to do it in, and then to bring it and read it to us. This was a Way that half a Dozen of us used to take to perfect ourselves in Pleading. Our Friend undertook the Task, and performed it in the following Manner; but we never saw the Face of that excellent Man, after we parted with him; a sudden Distemper put a sudden End to his Life, and to the Hopes he had raised, in all that knew him, of becoming one of the eminentest Men of the Age. We found, by his foul Copy, that he had added a good deal to what is here said, and had fallen with some Sharpness upon the Antient Latin Church-Writers, tho' he had otherwise a very great and true Respect for their Works; but this he had drawn a Scratch over, and so we have left it out. Our Love to our Friend may make us somewhat partial in his Favour, and over-value his Performance; but nothing can make us believe, that it will not be very acceptable to the Publick; nor hinder us from hoping, that from hence it will be seen, that something more was due to this unfortunate Pair than the common Pity.



T H E  
C A S E.

I. G. D. *without the Knowledge and Consent of his Father (then alive, but accounted not of sound Judgment) was, at the Age of Fifteen, by the Procurement and Persuasion of those in whose Keeping he was, married, according to the Church Form, to M. F. of the Age of Thirteen.*

II. *This young Couple was put to Bed, in the Day-time, according to Custom, and continued there a little while, but in the Presence of the Company, who all testify they touched not one the other; and after that, they came together no more; the young Gentleman going immediately Abroad, the young Woman continuing with her Parents.*

III. G. D. *after Three or Four Years Travel, return'd home to England, and being sollicitated to live with his lawful Wife, refused it, and frequently and publickly declar'd he never would compleat the Marriage.*

IV. *Fourteen Years have pass'd since this Marriage-Ceremony was perform'd; and each Party having (as is natural to think) contracted an incurable Aversion to each other, is very desirous to be set at liberty; and accordingly Application is made to the Legislative Power, to dissolve this Marriage, and to give each Party leave, if they think fit, to marry elsewhere.*

The Reasons against such Dissolution are,

*First*, That each Party was consenting to the Marriage, and was old enough to give such Consent, according to the known Laws of the Kingdom; the Male being Fifteen Years old, the Female Thirteen; whereas the Years of Consent are, by Law, Fourteen and Twelve.

*Secondly*, They were actually married according to the Form prescrib'd by the Church of England; the Minister pronouncing those solemn Words used by our Saviour, *Those whom God has join'd, let no Man put asunder.* They are therefore Man and Wife both by the Laws of God and of the Land; and since nothing but *Adultery* can dissolve a Marriage, and no *Adultery* is pretended here, the Marriage continues indissoluble.



T H E  
P L E A.

My LORDS,

I Intreat you to favour me whilst I speak a few Words to the Bill that is now brought before you, notwithstanding what I hear whispered about by the People that stand near me, that this is a Matter proper to the *Clergy*, and that we are to acquiesce in the Judgment and Opinion of my Lords the *Bishops*, who are agreed that such a Marriage as this is not to be dissolved. My Lords, the Bishops themselves are (under Favour) not agreed upon this Matter, although the Majority of the present ones is, as I hear, against the Dissolution of this Marriage: But were they all here, and all unanimous in the Point, would that be a binding Argument? I am a little ashamed to hear *Laymen* say, that Cases of this Nature fall not properly under their Cognizance and Consideration, but are to be decided by the *Clergy* only. There are no such Difficulties in the Case before us, as I apprehend it; 'tis what we may all of us understand, and, I believe, we most of us do: And to defer and yield intirely to *Authority*, where we are able to hear Reason and to judge, is a Submission that is no more due, than, I dare say, it is expected by that Venerable Bench. I will therefore, with your Lordships Indulgence, speak my Mind in this Matter freely.

I hear it is said, my Lords, that a Marriage that was once good and valid, is for ever after that *indissoluble*, unless in the Case of *Adultery*. I wonder, by the way, how they came to except *the Case of Adultery*; for tho' our blessed Saviour has excepted the Case of Adultery, yet the Stream of Authority, the Generality of those great Men, whom we call the *Fathers* of the *Latin Church*, together with the Rabble of *Schoolmen* and *Commentators*, have almost all to a Man denied the innocent Party the Liberty of marrying again, altho' divorced from an adulterous Partner; and I would fain know how much a *Divorce* is worth, above Six-pence, without leave to marry again, if the injur'd Party pleases? But I only mention this, to let your Lordships see, whither the Reverence of Authority alone, and great Names, may carry those who will be led tamely by them, and will not use the Reason and good Sense which God has given them.

I ask your Lordships Pardon for this Digression, and come to the Point. A Marriage, we are told, is good, where the Parties concerned were at Age and Liberty to consent, and actually consented, and were actually married by the Form prescribed in the Book of *Common-Prayer*. And such a Marriage, we are also told, is indissoluble by the Law of God. I will not waste the least of your Lordships Time in needless Cavils, but take it for granted, that the Man now concerned was Fifteen Years of Age, and the Woman Thirteen, which are Years of Consent by the Laws of the Land: And that they were actually marry'd by the prescribed Form. But I deny that the Marriage is therefore *indissoluble* by the Legislative Power of the Land, and that for many Reasons.

My Lords, The Years of Consent are not fix'd to Fourteen or Twelve either by *Nature*, *Reason*, or any *Law of God*; but purely and merely by the positive Laws of the Land, which may change them to-morrow, and if they were changed to-day,



no Man in *England* would, I dare affirm it, be dissatisfied; it seems so senseless and unreasonable to give our Children the Power of disposing of their *Persons* for ever, at an Age when we will not let them dispose of Five Shillings, without Direction and Advice. But I insist not upon that at present; the Law is already made, and I consider it as such; but still it is but a *Human Law*, and the same Power which determines it to bind in the *general*, may, if it seem fitting, determine it not to bind in this or any such *particular Case*; and that without Offence either to God or Man. The Laws indeed must fix upon a certain Time, or otherwise the Subject will want Direction, and a Rule to go by: And let us take it for granted now, that the Time fixed by the Laws is a reasonable and fitting Time for 99 People in a Hundred; yet if the Hundredth Person be aggrieved to Death, or worse than Death, by such a Law, what is the Impediment, what the Danger, what the Mischief, of declaring the Hundredth Person not to be bound by that Law? If it were possible for Human Wisdom to foresee all the Inconveniences and Mischiefs that can arise, would not the Legislative Power provide a Remedy for all? Would it not make its Rules as comprehensive as it could, so that they might comprise and take in all Cases and Persons possible? But this we find was never done, nor ever will be done: No Foresight is sufficient for all Accidents. But there is room for After-thought; and a Power to cure the Evils which it could not prevent, because it could not foresee, is lodged in every Government. 'Tis to that Power we have now recourse: We pray Relief against a Law, which however just and fitting it may be thought in itself, and beneficial to others, binds *Us* to nothing but Misery; and truly *kills*, according to the Letter. The Man and Woman were *at Age*, according to the Law, but wanted that Maturity and Forwardness of Age, which the Law supposes and requires in People of Twelve and Fourteen, when it makes them capable of marrying at those Years. They gave *Consent* indeed with their Tongues, and pronounced the solemn Words, by which they mutually delivered up themselves each to the other, that is, they did as they were bid to do, and said just as the Parents and Priest commanded them to say. But where was the Consent of Heart? Where was the Knowledge and Understanding that is requisite to the forming a Resolution of this nature, and to the making such a solemn Contract? My Lords, the Children were entirely passive in the Matter, and very obedient to the Orders of those that governed them; and would have given away their Fortunes and their Liberties, and every thing they had, had they been bid to do so, in the same manner. I may affirm, because I have taken great Pains to be informed of the Truth, that this young Couple came together to contract, and to consent to Marriage, without so much as the Desire or Appetite of being married; without so much as knowing what it was they were to bargain and contract for: They consented to give the Use and the Dominion of their Bodies each to the other, as long as they both should live, without so much as understanding what they meant when they said so; without so much as an Ability of making good their Promises and Engagements.

This, my Lords, is the *Consent* this Couple of young and thoughtless Creatures gave; and this Consent the Church, it seems, insists upon. The solemn Promise was pronounced in solemn manner by the Priest, and the Children were bid to *say after him*, and said after him, and then the Knot was tied, that nothing can loose but Death. Is there any thing in the World so like a *Charm* as this? My Lords, there is not any Contract in the World but may be utterly dissolved, by the free Consent of Parties, if without Prejudice to any Third. I like a Horse that is in any Man's Possession, and he likes the Price I offer for it; we thereupon agree, and pass our Words each to the other: His Promise then gives me a Right to the Horse, and my Promise gives him a Right to the Price agreed upon. But in a little time we each of us bethink ourselves, and each dislikes the Bargain he has made, and each agrees

to



to set the other at his Liberty : I have not used your Horse, nor have you gotten my Money. Here the Contract is utterly dissolved by the Consent of Parties, and no third Man is hurt thereby. Will any Man say that we have done amiss? Will any one say that we have so much as broken our Word each to the other? The Word I gave to him was to secure his Bargain; the Word he gave to me was to secure me mine. If he dislikes the Bargain, he gives me (as it were) my Word again; and so do I to him; and then we are again at Liberty. My Lords, If we should carry the Matter farther yet, and to secure the Bargain we seem at first so fond of, should give our *Oath* to each other, in Presence of a great Company, and with what Solemnity besides you will, yet I affirm, (and so do all the *Casuits* in the World, as I am told by those who know) I say, my Lords, that I affirm, that if in this Case, after this solemn Oath, we should both of us freely consent to break this Agreement off, and no body else be hurt thereby, we should neither of us be guilty of Perjury, or Breach of Oath. Our Oaths were given to each other, to secure the Promises that were made; and if we, each of us, see reason to consent, and freely do consent, to release each other of his Promise, the Oath can lay no Obligation on us. I promised, and I swore I would perform that Promise to him; he did the same to me, but neither of us, after some time, cared, or required, to have such Promise made good to him; our Oaths must therefore follow the Nature of our Promises; and when the Promise is released, the Oath is so also. It may be we both of us did amiss in calling God to Witness (as in an Oath Men are presumed to do) in an Affair of so light Moment; I will not dispute that now, but I maintain that such an Oath obliges not, if the Promise, for whose Security the Oath was given, be mutually released, and no body hurt thereby. My Lords, I appeal to those who understand these Matters, whether what I say be not true.

Whence is it then, that the *Marriage-Contract* should be indissoluble, when all other Contracts, tho' confirmed with solemn Oaths, may be dissolved, if the contracting Persons agree to such a Dissolution, and no third Person suffers by it? How comes a Promise of this Nature to differ from all other Promises whatever? Oh, say the *Popish* Casuists, it is because this same Matrimony is a great *Sacrament*. No, say the *Protestant* Divines with us, it is no Sacrament, but it is the Ordinance of God, instituted in Paradise, in the Time of Man's Innocence, and signifies to us the mystical Union that is betwixt Christ and his Church; and the Promise is made with all Solemnity, in the Presence of God, in the Church, before the Priest and all the Company, and confirmed with the Words of Christ: And therefore a Consent and Promise made in such a solemn manner, can never be retracted or dissolved.

My Lords, I intend not to say one Word against the Dignity of Marriage. But I do not think that the Solemnity of *Words*, of *Place*, and *Company*, in which a Contract is made, adds any Strength or Virtue to such Contract, or makes it more obliging.

A Man indeed will certainly be more *ashamed* to break a Promise made at Church, and before a great Company, than he will be to break such a Promise made to his Friend alone, at his own House. But is he more obliged in Conscience to keep his *publick* Promise than his *private* one? Will any honest Man say that? The Obligation therefore does not arise from the Solemnity of *Words*, and *Place*, and *Company*, but from the free and voluntary Promise which a Man makes, and the Right he thereby gives to another. The Scandal also and Offence that is given and taken by a Breach of Promise, made in solemn manner, is indeed greater, than is occasioned by the Breach of a Promise made in private: But the reason of that is, because more People know of it; for if the same People were assured that such a Promise was indeed made, altho' in private, they would as certainly condemn the Breach of it, as they would, had it been made before them all, and they would be as much scandalized at such a Breach, as if they had been Witnesses to the making the Promise: Which

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is a Proof that a Man's Obligation to keep his Promise, arises from *his having freely made it*, and not from his having made it in such a *Place*, and before such a *Company*, and in such a particular *Form of Words*.

The first Marriage that ever was made, was made without any Words at all, that we know of, expressing their Consent; and it was so *clandestine*, that there was not so much as a mortal Man by, no not a Priest to join them together: But God who made them, brought the Woman to the Man, and instructed them by Reason and natural Principles, that they were made each for the other. There was Consent of Heart, and Union of Affections. But I insist not upon the Example; it is too singular to be a Rule. Years of Age are necessary; and Consent, in express Words, mutually given and taken, is necessary to make a Marriage-Contract good and valid.

This is the Ordinance of God, this is of divine Appointment, that one Man and one Woman should freely and knowingly give Consent to be each other's, to all the Ends and Purposes of Matrimony, as long as they both should live, and should not be allowed to give themselves to any one's Use besides.

And all that Christ added (if indeed he added any thing, or did any more than revive it) to this original Institution was, That when either of the Parties brake their Contract by Adultery, the innocent Party was at liberty to separate from the faulty one, and marry another, if it were thought fitting. Since therefore all that is absolutely necessary to the making a Marriage-Contract, is, that a Male and Female, who are at Age, and Liberty to consent, should actually consent to give the Use and Dominion each of their Bodies, to the other; and, exclusive of all others, to live together faithfully till Death parted them: Since this is so, I do affirm, that *Caius* and *Caia*, two *Heathens*, giving their Consent, in the Manner abovementioned, in their Father's Parlour, are Man and Wife *according to God's Ordinance*; their Marriage is as true, as good, and as innocent a Marriage, in the Sight of God, as the Marriage of a *Jew* and *Jewess*, tho' both in Covenant with God, made before the High-Priest himself, with all the Ceremonies you can imagine, and in what Form of Words you will, before a hundred Witnesses, and at the Altar in the Temple of *Jerusalem*.

I am, my Lords, so satisfied of the Truth of what I say, that I go on to say, with all Assurance, that the Marriage-Contract of this *Caius* and *Caia* was as good, as binding, and as innocent as the Marriage Contract of any Lord in this Assembly, tho' solemnized in the Church of *St. Paul's*, according to the established Form in the *Common-Prayer*, by his Grace my Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury* himself, repeating those most sacred Words of Christ, *Those whom God has joined, let no Man put asunder*. And I averr, That God did as surely join *Caius* and *Caia*, when they consented to become Husband and Wife for Life, as he has joined any Couple else for these Seventeen hundred and fifteen Years. So that I hope, my Lords, you will not suffer your Eyes to be dazzled with the Pomp and Glitter of great Words, and awful Sounds, which fly before good Sense, and vanish when you come to look into the Reason of Things.

*Caius* and *Caia* must express their Consent in *Words* and *Signs* appointed by the Laws of their Country; and must be married by the *Persons* set apart for such Service, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of their Religion: So must the *Jewish Pair*, according to theirs; and so must *Christians* also. But there is something common to them all; and that in which they all unite must needs be that which makes the Marriage-Contract valid and obliging. And what is that, but that a Male and Female should be at Age to consent, and at Liberty to consent, and should actually consent, to give to each other the Use and Dominion of each other's Body, exclusively to all the World besides, as long as they both shall live?

This is properly the Marriage-Contract, and common to all Nations and Religions; and all beyond this, is Matter of Ceremony, Decency, and Prudence; and ordered by the Legislative Powers of different Countries, as they see convenient. And I do not  
so



so much as pretend to dispute the Force and Obligation of these Laws, to such as are subject to these different Powers: They are, and may, and must be binding as to the Dowries of the Wives, and the Legitimation of Children, and their inheriting Estates and Honours, and in all such like Cases.

My Lords, so much has been said in favour of the Solemnity of *Words*, of *Place*, and *Persons*, which are, in truth, but *Circumstances* to a Marriage-Contract, that it has made me spend so much of your Time, to try to lay aside that Prejudice, and to consider the present Contract itself. We were not of Age sufficient for Consent, altho' we were of Age according to the Letter of the Law. We gave our Consent to be married, but it was not the Consent of Understanding, for we knew not what it was that Marriage meant. We repeated very solemn Words, after the Priest, as we were bidden; but it was but the Labour of the Lips; the Heart *did not*, the Heart indeed *could not* go along with them: For whether we take the Heart for *Knowledge*, or *Desire*, there was no *Heart* concerned in all this Matter: We neither of us knew the Nature of the Contract we were making; we neither of us had so much as the Desire of doing what that Contract both supposes and requires. And now, my Lords, we humbly hope you will not let us be *at Age*, only to do ourselves irreparable Mischief; nor call that a *Consent*, which is to compleat our Ruin, and which can serve no other End.

We do not deny ourselves to have been at *legal Age*; we do not deny that we have given a *verbal Consent*; but we deny ourselves to have been at Years of Understanding to give such a Consent as is reasonable and fitting in a Matter of such Importance. And we appeal to your Lordships Equity, whether this Age and this Consent shall stand good to our Undoing, and to the Advantage of no Creature in the World besides: For who, my Lords, will be the worse for setting us at Liberty, or who will be the better for our being bound? I am exceedingly sensible, that I have trespassed much upon your Lordships Patience, but I am bound in Justice and in Conscience to beg a little more of it, to speak a Word or two to the last Part of the Objection, That since the Parties before you, in Petition, are Man and Wife both by the Laws of God and of the Land; and since by the Laws of God nothing but Adultery can dissolve a Marriage, and no Adultery is pretended here, the Marriage of Consequence continues indissoluble.

To save your Lordships Time, I will grant every thing that can be granted; I grant that by the Laws of God, nothing can dissolve a compleat Marriage but Adultery; and I grant that no Adultery is pretended in the Case; but I deny that this Marriage before you is therefore *indissoluble*, because I must and do deny the Marriage before you to be a *compleat* Marriage, by the Laws of God: And I hope, with your Lordships Favour and Indulgence, to shew it is not a compleat Marriage, because it never was *consummated*.

The Love and the Desire that Men and Women have each of the other, is what is implanted in the Hearts of all of them, by God himself who made them; and is therefore as innocent an Appetite as any else they have; and it has (as every other Appetite) its proper Satisfaction provided for it by the good Creator: And when it fixes on its proper Object, is satisfied as innocently, as the Desire of Meat, or Drink, or Sleep can be. Marriage, my Lords, is fixing the Desire upon its proper Object: And this Desire is never to be satisfied with Innocence, but in the Marriage-Bed. The End of Marriage therefore is the Satisfaction of this Appetite. This is the End and Purpose of God in making them Male and Female; this is the Way, the only Way, of their becoming *one Flesh*: And therefore till the End is answered, where it can be answered, Marriage is not perfect and compleat. God cannot properly be said to have joined those together, who never joined themselves together, in the natural Way, of his Appointment: And therefore, under Favour, 'tis a great Misapplication



of those sacred Words, to the Case before us, where the two Parties never *came together* in the Sense intended by those Words.

What can be plainer than this Proposition?

The End of Marriage, by God's Institution, is, that two should become one Flesh.

The two before you in the Bill were never yet *one Flesh*. Your Lordships will make this Conclusion, *Those whom God has joined, let no Man put asunder*.

The two before you in the Bill were never yet conjoined by God, in the true Meaning of those Words; they may therefore as yet be put asunder by *Men*, as I hope they will by your Lordships.

My Lords, the Easiness of granting a Divorce in Cases of *Impotence*, is a good Proof that Marriage is not compleat and perfect where the Ends of it are not to be obtained; 'tis a Proof that it was no Marriage, but a *Nullity* from the beginning, altho' the Parties were at *full Age*, altho' they gave a *free Consent*, and were married with all Formalities; altho' the Priest pronounced them Man and Wife *in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, and said those sacred Words over their Heads, *Those whom God has joined, let no Man put asunder*, they were not Man and Wife, because they could not become *one Flesh*: They were not *joined by God*, because they could not join themselves together. Your Lordships will consider therefore, whether a Marriage not consummated (nor ever like to be consummated) be a compleat Marriage in God's Sight; so compleat, I mean, as to be *indissoluble*. I shall be told, I know, that in the Case before us, there is now no Defect of *Power*, no *Impotence* or *Inability* to compleat the Marriage pretended, but want of *Will*.

I own it, and I only use the Instance to shew that a Marriage not consummated, is not *indissoluble* by the Laws of God; and that *an utter Aversion* to the Consummation of Marriage, in both Parties, is as good a Reason for a Divorce, as an Inability in *one Party*, which never fails of procuring a Divorce. In the one Case, the Parties are each of them untouched, pure and unfulfilled even in Thought; whilst in the other, there must pass such Things, as I have neither *Will* nor *Leave* to mention; and yet a Divorce follows of course. My Lords, if ever we had *come together* in this manner, I had not had one Word to reply on this Occasion; all I have said of our *want of Age* would have signified nothing; all I have said of our giving *no Consent* had been said to no Purpose; had Consummation followed any time within these fourteen Years, we must not have appeared in this Place. But when, to our want of Age, and want of Knowledge to consent to Marriage, we can also add, that we have never come together to compleat this Marriage, and that we are as pure from each other, as we were when born, we humbly hope your Lordships will deliver us from the Chains which the Laws of our Country only have bound us with.

'Tis said, my Lords, that Consummation is not necessary to compleat a Marriage, because a Man is Master of the Woman's Fortune, and the Woman has a Right to her Dowry, altho' the Man or Woman should chance to die before the Nuptial-Bed were made ready. My Lords, I grant, that, when the Parties who were at Age, and Liberty, have given their Consent, and the Priest has done his Work, according to the Form prescribed, the *Law* is satisfied, and looks no farther; and gives each Party a Right to all the Advantages agreed upon, tho' Consummation follow not: The Laws suppose that what is reasonable and fitting will follow, and only secures *legal Advantages* that are contracted for. The other is a Point of Duty and of Conscience. I only ask, whether there be a Man or Woman in the World, who thinks that the End of Marriage, as it is God's Ordinance, is fully answered, till it be consummated? My Lords, we come not here to say that a Marriage is not a *legal Marriage* till Consummation; nor to assign a *Day*, or a *Week*, or a *Month*, for such Completion: We presume not to trifle in that manner in such an Assembly as this. We only mean to say, that a Marriage not consummated, nor ever like to be consummated, is *dissoluble*,



ble, without Offence to any Law of God; and that a Marriage of that kind is not a compleat Marriage *in his Sight*; the full Purpose of *his Institution* is not answered till they become *one Flesh*. All that goes before is previously necessary to the making such Conjunction innocent, but it is not what is mainly and principally intended by Him *who made them Male and Female*. And therefore 'tis but an Impertinence to tell us, that *Adam* and *Eve* were compleatly married before they went into the *Bridal Bower*: 'Tis so with every honest Couple, as well as with our first Parents: But would they have been compleatly married, had they never gone into that Bridal Bower at all, and lived for many Years? What Marriage, I pray, would that have been? They might have been good *Company* and good *Friends*, but they could no more have been said to be *Man and Wife*, with respect to what God intended by Marriage, than *two Men*, or *two Women*, living together in *Unity* and *Amity*, may be said to be *married together*. I believe it would puzzle the Doctors to prove that *Adam* and *Eve* were ever married at all, any otherwise than by a mutual Consent to go together; for there was no Consent of any *Superior* to ask or obtain; and there could be no need of promising to be faithful to each other, for there was no body else to go to. I wonder such an Instance should be pitched upon.

But now, my Lords, I come to the great Argument of all, which is brought to prove a Marriage *compleat*; tho' its Effect never follow; and that is, that *Joseph* and the *Blessed Virgin* were, and are often called in the Holy Scripture, *Man and Wife*, altho' we are sure by Scriptures they never came together *till* the Holy Child was born; and, *by Tradition*, sure they never came together *after* it was born.

This Example I take to be the Ground and Bottom of all those absurd Doctrines and Propositions that are raised, in maintaining a Marriage to be compleat by the Consent of Parties, and the Benediction of the Priest, without any other Fruit or Effect. *Joseph* and the *Blessed Virgin* were certainly espoused and betrothed each to the other; and he thereby became so much *her Husband*, that he thought of putting her away, which shews he thought she was *his Wife*: And he is called *her Husband* by the Evangelist St. *Matthew*; and she herself calls *Joseph* the Father of her Son, *Thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing*: And a little before they are called *his Parents*. There is not a Word of all this that I either do, or dare deny. Be pleased, my Lords, but to remember and observe, that the same Scriptures that call *Joseph* the *Husband* of the Blessed Virgin, do also call *Joseph* the *Father of her Son*; and the same Scriptures that call *Joseph* and *Mary* *Husband and Wife*, do also call *Joseph* and *Mary* the *Parents of Jesus*. And he was in truth as much the *Husband* of the Virgin, as he was the *Father* of her Son; and much in the same Sense, and to the same Purpose. My Lords, I have taken some Pains to understand this Matter; and what I am going to say, I have from very good Authority, living as well as dead, for it is something out of the way of my Profession. It was absolutely necessary, by God's Appointment, that the Saviour of the World should be *born of a Woman*: And it was, by the same Appointment, full as necessary that he should not be the *Son of Man*, in the common Way. To reconcile these Difficulties therefore, he was *conceived by the Holy Ghost*, and *born of the Virgin Mary*. But because this Saviour of the World was to be, in especial manner, the *Messiah* of the *Jews*, he was to be born a *Jew*; to descend from *Abraham*, according to the Promise, of the Tribe of *Judah*, of the House and Lineage of *David*. This *Messiah* the *Jews* expected should be born as other Men were born; and they would never have received him as such, or heard him as a Prophet and Teacher sent from God, unless they had believed him to be born in *lawful Wedlock*; as they certainly did, or else you would have heard of it over and over in the Gospels, which conceal none of the Slanders, Contumelies and Reproaches, which the *Jews*, upon all Occasions, did so plentifully pour upon our Saviour. Had the Blessed *Mary* not been *married*, what would



would the People have said of her? What would they not have said of her and of her Son? It was therefore absolutely necessary to the *Jews* receiving Christ for the *Messiah*, and hearkning to him, that he should be born under the Reputation of *Marriage*; which could not be, unless she took a *Husband* in the usual manner. You see what Entertainment both his Person and Doctrine found, altho' he was supposed to be born in Wedlock, and of honest Parents, only because of their mean and low Condition; but what had been his Fortune, had they thought him *spurious*?

I am almost sorry I have occasion to speak of these Matters; and I restrain myself from going on, in hopes that enough is said to shew, that the Marriage of *Joseph* with the *Blessed Virgin* was all (as I am told the antient Christian Writers call it) *according to Oeconomy*. It was to save Appearances; to cover both the Mother and the Son from the Reproaches of ignorant malicious People, till it should please God, in his own good time, to manifest the Truth more clearly to the World; and therefore though it might be wrapped in Prophecies before his Birth, yet it was not till after his Death that it became an Article of Faith, that he was *conceived by the Holy Ghost*, and *born of the Virgin Mary*. During the Life of Christ, *Joseph* was the *supposed Husband* of the blessed Virgin, and the *supposed Father* of her blessed Son; and, under the Cover of that Relation, was to take upon him, under God, the Care and Protection of them both.

Will any Man, after this, pretend to say that this was a *complete Marriage*, as Marriage is the Ordinance of God? It was complete to all the Ends and Purposes that God intended by it: It screened the Mother and the Son from Blame and Slander; and it provided for them such Defence and Maintenance as was convenient. But what is this to God's original Institution? Or how can such a thing be drawn into Example? *Joseph* and *Mary* are said to be marry'd, although they never *did* complete that Marriage, although they never *must* complete it; therefore a Marriage-Contract is a complete Marriage in any one else as well as them, although they proceed no farther! That is, (I humbly pray your Lordships to observe) there was a Marriage-Contract made, about some 1715 Years ago, betwixt a holy Man and the most excellent and holy Maid that ever lived upon the Earth; placed in such Circumstances as never happened before, nor ever will happen again; upon an extraordinary and most astonishing Occasion: The Contract was, that this Man should be called the *Husband* of this Virgin, for Reasons that never happened before, nor ever will happen again; and this Couple, by God's Appointment, never were to touch each other, in the matrimonial Way, till the Birth of a Child, that was *to be called* (because he truly was) *the Son of God*. Now this most rare, most singular, most unexampled Instance, is brought to convince your Lordships, that a bare Marriage-Contract makes a complete Marriage, according to the Laws of God, without proceeding any farther, in every other Couple that is married: And the Parties for whom I now appear are said to be *completely married*, although they never came together, because the blessed *Virgin* and *Joseph* were completely married, although they went no farther than a Marriage-Contract, nor ever *could go* farther, by God's Appointment. My Lords, if such an Example as this can operate so extensively and strangely, we must give over making Consequences in the way of Reason, and attend to the Dictates of our spiritual Masters, without examining what it is they say. I do not know what Form of Words the *Jews* made use of when they were married; but I know, methinks, that the Form prescribed by the *Church of England* would have been very odd, improper, and absurd, to have been used to that blessed Couple, when it describes the Ends of Matrimony to be, *First*, For the Procreation of Children; *Secondly*, For a Remedy against Sin; and, *Thirdly*, For mutual Society, Help and Comfort, that the one ought to have of the other. The Sum of all is this, that the Ends of *this particular Marriage*, which God intended, were fully answered, by a *Marriage-Contract*



*Contract only*; but the Ends of Marriage *in general*, as it is God's Ordinance, neither were, nor might be answered by such Contract only; and therefore 'tis an absurd unreasonable thing to argue from the Compleatness of the one, to the Compleatness of any other, that *may* proceed farther, and that *ought* to proceed farther, and is certainly not compleat till it *does* proceed farther.

Another Argument to prove a Marriage to be compleat, by a Marriage-Contract only, without proceeding to Consummation, is fetched from the Law of *Moses*, *Deut.* xxii. 23. where a Woman, betrothed or espoused to a Man, is to be stoned to Death, as an Adulteress, if she admit another to her Bed; which shews that the Validity of Marriage proceeds from the mutual Covenant and Consent that two have given to be each other's.

My Lords, I yield to every Word of this, and to whatever else can be said of the same kind. A Marriage-Contract does certainly give a Right to every thing contracted for. As soon as we are married, I have a Right to her *Person*, a Right to her *Fortune*, a Right to her *Reputation*; and if any one injure her in any of those Particulars, I have a Right to her *Vindication*; for she is really mine, and I am hers: And I own I am as much married to her the first Morning, and she to me, as I shall be the Morning or Week after, as to all the Ends and Purposes which human Laws can propose or take any Cognizance of. And if she abuses any one the Hour after she is married, 'tis I must answer for it. If she gives away any of her Goods, which are now become mine, why no body can receive them; I shall recover them, for they are mine. And if she give away herself, (though I have never yet come near her) she is certainly an *Adulteress*; she has given away what was mine, and broken her Faith and Contract, and is liable to whatever Penalty the Laws of the Country think fit to inflict upon such Offenders. I could moreover answer this Law of *Moses* by another Law of the same *Moses*, which sets a Man at liberty from a Maid he was betrothed to, if she please him not when the time of Marriage comes. 'Tis in *Exod.* xxi. 8. And the only Difference is, that the Maid betrothed in *Exodus* was not *free*, but a *Servant*; the Maid betrothed in *Deuteronomy* was a *free Woman*. But though this makes a great Difference in the Laws and Customs of a Country, yet certainly 'tis none in Point of Conscience: The Obligation there is alike to *Bond* as *Free*, if other Circumstances make no Difference. But the answering one Objection with another clears up nothing. I own that the Validity of Marriage proceeds from the mutual Covenant. But pray what is this mutual Covenant? Is it not the consenting and agreeing of a Man and Woman to give to each other the Use and Dominion of their Bodies, exclusive of all the World besides, as long as they both shall live? What is it that the Parties *contract for*? What is it People *consent to* upon these Occasions? I know it is said by Father *Ambrose*, *Connubium non facit Defloratio Virginitatis, sed Pactio Conjugal.* And it was said before him long by Father *Ulpian*, *Nuptias non Concubitus sed Consensus facit.* And certainly every body will say after them, that the Agreement of a Man and Woman to lie together, does not make a Marriage. But will St. *Ambrose* tell us, that a *Pactio Conjugal.* (a Marriage Covenant) can be fully answered without *Concubency*, if the Parties live and are not hindred? In truth I will not answer for the *Father*, who (as the rest of them) had *Joseph* and *Mary* always in his Eye: But I will answer for the *Civil Lawyer*, who, I am sure, would never say a Marriage was compleat, that was not, if it could have been, consummated. Hear what *Modestinus* says, *Nuptiæ sunt Conjunctio Maris & Fæminæ, & consortium omnis vitæ.* 'Tis true he was a *Heathen Lawyer*, but had he also added, that Marriage was ordained to be a *Remedy* against *Sin*, he had talked the Language of our *Common-Prayer-Book.* For he says it is for the Procreation of Children, (*Conjunctio Maris & Fæminæ*) and for mutual Society, Help and Comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, and taking each other



for better for worse, which is but the *Englisk* of *Consortium omnis vitæ*. *Paulus*, another *Civilian*, says, that *Nuptiæ consistere non possunt, nisi consentiant omnes*, i. e. *qui coeunt, quorumque in potestate sunt*. There is no such thing as a right Marriage, where there is not the Consent of all Parties, i. e. the Consent of the two *qui coeunt*, and the Consent of Parents or Guardians in whose Power and Disposal the young ones were. All Writers in the World agree, that *Consent, Covenant, Contract*, (call it what you will) is so necessary to a Marriage, that it cannot be valid without it; but then they also say, that such a Consent is a Consent to answer the Ends of Marriage; that such a Covenant is a Covenant to live together, according to God's Ordinance; and that such a Contract is a Contract for the Use and Dominion of each other's Body; which is, in effect, neither more nor less than what *St. Paul* has said in *1 Cor. vii. 3, 4.* which I repeat not, because it is so well known. But they who think a Marriage is a compleat and perfect Marriage, according to God's Ordinance, (for as to *human positive Laws*, I contest it not) although it never be consummated; they I desire may read that Passage, and consider it.

My Lords, there is another slight Objection which I will but just mention, and that is, That the Church allows the *oldest People* that are, to be married, and accounts their Marriage good, altho' there is neither Hope nor Likelihood of having Children; and accordingly appoints the Prayer for that Purpose to be omitted and left out; and therefore a Marriage is compleat by *Contract only*, without any Consummation.

The Argument, I think, is this, That because a Marriage is a good Marriage which is *not* consummated, because it *cannot* be by reason of People's Age, therefore a Marriage is a good Marriage tho' not consummated, which yet *may be* consummated any Day in the Year. If this be a right Inference, there is no making a wrong one, for one can never make a worse. My Lords, the Church neither does nor can pretend to determine when People are too old to marry: It meddles with no such Matters, but leaves every one to their Discretion. She seems to assign three Ends of Marriage, which I have had Occasion to mention before; and if the *first* cannot be answered, the *second* may, and so may the *third*, tho' the other two should not.

And now, my Lords, I hope I have shewn that the *Bill* before you is a *good Bill*; that the *Divorce* we sue for is very *reasonable and just*, and that such a Marriage as ours, made at such an Age, with such a Consent as is indeed no Consent, and never consummated, tho' fourteen Years since, is such a Marriage as may very innocently be dissolved, without any manner of Offence to the Laws of God. And I desire any Man to assign any one Law of God that would be hurt thereby, unless we are made to believe that every *Law of the Church*, is also a *Law of God*; which when I hear affirmed, I shall not want an Answer to it. But I am sure the Laws of God, which are properly so called, are to be found in a *holy Book*, where nothing appears against us. For as for those Passages which allow a Man to put away his Wife for no Cause but that of Adultery, 'tis certain, to a Demonstration, that they refer to Marriages that have been *completed* and consummated by Man and Wife. And if your Lordships would indulge me so far, I would venture to say, that no Man of common Sense can read those Passages, and think otherwise. My Lords, he must be a *Scholar*, that can read that Question of the *Pharisee's*, and the Determination of our Blessed Saviour, about Divorces, and conclude after all, that the Marriages there spoken of, might be such Marriages as never were consummated, as well as such as were. 'Tis impossible to mistake so plain a Case, without a good deal of Learning and Study. My Lords, it stirs me to a little Indignation, and gives me a Concern, somewhat beyond my Fee, to hear this Marriage-Contract of ours treated like a Marriage of fourteen Years standing, where Man and Wife have all along cohabited, and now are weary of each other, and the common Bed, and seeking to your Lordships for leave to look for more agreeable Companions. Why else are all these Places of *Scripture* brought against our  
Bill,



Bill, when not a single Line of them is pertinent and proper to our Case? If they had brought the Scriptures to prove, that a Boy of Fifteen, and a Girl of Thirteen, not born in Paradise, or in the Gardens of the East, but in a cold and frozen Climate of the North, were of Age sufficient to dispose of their Persons for ever, they had done something to the Purpose, for that, my Lords, was our Age. If they had brought the Scriptures to prove, that a Boy and Girl, of the Years aforesaid, repeating a Form of Words, after a certain Person, in a Church, between the Hours of Eight and Twelve, had thereby made a Contract that must stand like *Fate*, and be irrevocable as the Hours that passed a Week ago, by any Power on Earth, they had done something to the Purpose, for that indeed we did. I have already owned, we said what we were bid to say; we did what we were bid to do: We should have done a great deal more, and said a great deal more, had we been ordered so: 'Tis not our Fault that we did not give it under our Hands, that our Marriage was *consummated* by the Words we repeated in the Church; had we been asked to do so, we had surely done it, such was our Innocence, such was our Ignorance! This, my Lords, had been the Point they should have laboured most to clear; for this they should have brought their Scripture-Proofs, to shew that the *Words* of a Marriage-Contract are, by God's Appointment, as soon as ever they are uttered, of so binding a Nature, that neither the Consent of Parties, nor all the Powers that are on Earth, can make them *null* and *void*: That it is proper and peculiar to this *Contract* never to be dissolved, tho' nothing but Words has passed. All other *Promises*, I must say again, all other *Covenants*, all other *Oaths*, are owned to be dissoluble, by the Consent of Parties, where no Injury is done to any Third. The *Marriage-Words*, it seems, are the only Words in the World that operate like a *Charm*, and take effect, in spite of all the Reason, and all the new Necessities, that can arise and be urged against it; altho' the Parties should not have so much as touched each other's Lips, nor ever shall. Here Scriptures would have done exceedingly well, and have obtained the Reverence and Obedience that is due to their Authority, had they but shewn that a *verbal Contract*, made with Solemnity, answers all the Ends and Purposes of Matrimony, as it is God's Ordinance; that it is not only previously necessary, both by the Laws of God and Man, to make the Conjunction of Man and Woman innocent, but that the verbal Contract is the *thing itself*, 'tis *Matrimony* to all Intents and Purposes; and is no more to be dissolved, than it had been, had the Fruit and Effect of it been half a Dozen Children now presented at your Lordships Bar. There is no End of the Absurdities that arise from treating a *Verbal Contract*, that has only passed the Lips, just as you would a *Marriage consummated*, and perfectly compleat; and therefore, tho' I call for their Scripture Proofs, yet I am well assured none can be brought to prove a Point so unreasonable. But to hear them heap up Scripture upon Scripture, to prove, that Marriage is God's Ordinance; that Marriages are sacred Contracts; that by the Laws of Christ, they cannot be dissolved but for the Cause of Fornication, is in my humble Opinion, to hear them say nothing to the Purpose, unless those Scriptures mean that Marriage *not consummated* is God's Ordinance; that Marriage-Contracts are sacred, altho' the very *End* and Meaning of the Contract is not answered; and that Marriages which Christ there speaks of as indissoluble (except for the sake of Adultery) are such Marriages as never were consummated. In short, if because the Word *Marriage* is a Word that is common to a Marriage *before* it is consummated, and also *after*, therefore whatever is applicable to a consummated Marriage, is also applicable to a Marriage not consummated; if this be a Consequence, a reasonable Man will be ashamed hereafter of making Consequences. We may as well conclude, that, because *Caius* is a Man, and *Titius* is a Man, therefore *Caius* and *Titius* are one and the same Man. They tell us also, from the Scriptures, that Matrimony signifies to us, the mystical  
Union



Union there is betwixt Christ and his Church; but let them say it, if they think fit, that Matrimony *not consummated* does, or *can* signify this Union: But in this I spare them, and indeed myself, not daring to speak with any Freedom on this Subject; and finding I have already transgressed too far, I humbly desire your Lordships to consider, whether there ever was so equitable a Cause of Divorce within the Walls of this House. It is so singular a Case, that it cuts off all your Fears of its becoming an Example; the oldest Lawyer living never heard the like in all respects; nor will the youngest ever live to see it made a Precedent: But were there Twenty such like Cases now before you, they are so reasonable and just, that they would every one deserve to be relieved by your Lordships; and 'tis below the Dignity of the Legislative Power to be afraid of making Precedents, were there is *Reason*, and *Justice*, and *Compassion* on their Side: To all which we lay as strong a Claim, as ever Parties did that ever were before this House.

## A SERMON



A  
S E R M O N

Preached at *Ely-House* Chapel in *Holbourn*, on *Thursday*,  
*June 7, 1716.* being the Day of *Publick Thanksgiving* for the  
Blessing of GOD upon His MAJESTY's Counfels and Arms,  
in suppressing the late UNNATURAL REBELLION.

P S A L M CVII. *Verse 2.*

*Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered  
from the hand of the enemy.*

IT is not certain *what* Deliverance it was that occasion'd the *Psalmist* to exhort the People to Thanksgiving, so earnestly and frequently, as he does in this *Psalm*: It is enough that there was Reason for so doing, and therefore the Words of the Text are general, and as applicable to any other People, as to the *Jews*---*Let them give thanks*, whosoever they are, and wheresoever they live, *whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered from the hand of the enemy.*

The Redemption from any Evil, that God hath wrought for a Nation, and his Deliverance of it from the Hand of the Enemy, is certainly a most sufficient Ground and Reason for Thanksgiving. I will first consider this in general, and then apply it in particular.

*First*, The Redemption and Deliverance of a Nation from the Hand of the Enemy, is a most reasonable and just Occasion of Thanksgiving to God. The Evils Men escape, are justly reckon'd as so many Mercies received, and Mercies received are the only proper Subjects of Thanksgiving; and therefore 'tis most reasonable and fit, *That they should give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the enemy*, i. e. from all the Evils and Calamities of War. Whatever can make Life desirable, is hazarded in War; and the best End that Men propose by War, is to incline and force the Adversary to Reason and Justice, to good Terms and a Desire of Peace, by the Sense of their present Sufferings, and by the Fears of greater. So that the very End of War is doing Mischief to Mankind, in order to bring them to Reason: And therefore whatever Mischiefs a Man can suffer, with respect to the free Exercise of his Religion, the serving God in Time, and Place, and decent Order; and with respect to his Estate and Fortune, the enjoying the Fruits of his Labour, or the Inheritance of his Ancestors; or with respect to the Life and Safety of himself and Friends: Whatever Mischiefs any one can suffer, with respect to any of these Particulars, he may expect them reasonably from War; there is nothing so likely to bring them on him, as the Sword of War: *That* is the Executioner of God's severest Vengeance, with respect to the Community. It spreads more Mischief, carries more Misfortunes than any Instrument of God's Anger. And therefore, to be freed from *the Hand of the Enemy*, is to be freed from almost all the Evils that a Man can undergo, and therefore such Deliverance well deserves a Thanksgiving.

Now such Deliverance is said to be *of God*, not only when he assists in a miraculous and visible Manner, and when the Means are apparently Divine, or disproportioned



to the End they work ; but when there appears nothing of God immediately in it, when nothing extraordinary or unusual happens, but second Causes work their natural Effects ; and Strength, and Force, and Numbers, Advantage of Ground, Plenty of Provision, Wind, and Sun, produce their usual Fruits and Consequences. God works Deliverances by *these*, as certainly as by his Miracles. And whosoever reads the *Psalms* of *David*, and knows his History withal, will see all his great Victories, and his Escapes, attributed to God's Hand in a manner marvellous and extraordinary ; when yet they were brought about, as Victories and great Deliverances are now-a-days, by great Armies and good Conduct, by Force and Subtilty, by Strength and Stratagem. Thus in *Psalms* xviii. *The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and deliverer, the God of my strength, in him will I trust : he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my Saviour, thou savest me from violence : I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised ; so shall I be saved from mine enemies. The sorrows of Hell compassed me about, the snares of death prevented me : in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God, and he did hear my voice : then the earth shook and trembled, the foundations of Heaven shook and were moved, because he was wroth. He bowed the Heavens also and came down, and it was dark under his feet ; he rode upon the Cherubim, and came flying upon the wings of the wind. The Lord thundered from Heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice ; he sent out arrows and scattered them, lightning and discomfited them : the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his displeasure. He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strongest enemy, and from them that hated me, because they were too mighty for me. God is my strength and power, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like harts feet, and setteth me up on high. He teacheth my hands to war, so that my arm shall break even a bow of steel. It is God that avengeth me and bringeth me forth from mine enemies ; he is the tower of salvation to his king, and sheweth mercy to his anointed for evermore.* Without remembering *David's* History, one would imagine that Heaven and Earth were moved on his behalf, and that the Course of Nature had been overthrown ; and that his Life was covered by continual Miracles, from all Attempts secret and open. And yet the Title of this *Psalms* tells us it was a *song of thanksgiving*, that *David sang in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul* : And by his History we know that no Miracle was ever wrought in his Favour, nothing supernatural or surprizing done in all his Life, but what great Courage and great Conduct, with the Blessing of God, might well have compassed. But from hence we may learn these few things, 1. That the *History* must still be consulted in explaining the *Psalms*. 2. That the *Jewish* Expression, and indeed the Expression of all the People that dwelt *Easternly*, is full of Pomp and Amplification, of Fancy and Hyperbole, and is not therefore to be taken in its large and literal Sense, but in a sober and restrained one. And 3. That whatever God is said, in all these Passages, to do, with so much Majesty and Might, with so great Power and Wonder, is done by human Means and human Instruments, and in an ordinary and natural Course, by human Strength and Cunning, by Vigilance, Activity, by finding and by taking hold of Opportunities, by common Armies, by Horse and Foot, by Bows and Arrows, Swords and Spears, Shields and other Instruments of Death and of Defence. All what is here attributed to God, is done by these, in the Hands of Men of Courage and Experience, which is his Arm and Sword. And therefore the Deliverances that all Men else have had from Enemies or other Evils, both may and ought to be ascribed to God, as well as these ; his Hand is still the same, his Power not shortned ; and therefore our Gratitude is full as due as theirs, for all the Mercies we receive ; it is from him alone, that all our Blessings come.



Nor is it only the Deliverance from an Enemy's Army, that *David* ascribes to God, but his Deliverances from any Evils or Mischiefs designed against himself in private. Thus when *Saul* privately purposed his Death, and it was discovered to him by *Jonathan*; and when he also sent Messengers to *David's* House to watch him and to slay him in the Morning, and it was discovered and defeated by his Daughter *Michal*, *David's* Wife, who told him-----*If thou savest not thy life, thou shalt be slain to morrow*,-----and helped to convey him safe away; he gives the Praise and Glory of these Deliverances to God alone, tho' the Discoveries were made by People from whom such Kindnesses might reasonably have been expected, a Wife, and a generous Friend and Brother-in-Law. And yet, upon this Occasion he composed the 59th Psalm----*God is my defence, the God of mercy shall prevent me, God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies. Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing, for God is my defence and my most merciful God.* And therefore 'tis but reasonable to ascribe to God Deliverances of any sort, by any Means and Instruments lawful and honest. It was God that delivered *David* by the Messengers and Informations of *Jonathan* and *Michal*, from being privately assassinated, as well as from falling into the Hands of his open Enemies, by his own extraordinary Courage and Conduct, and by the Affections of his People, and the Valour of his Soldiers; and therefore Praise and Thanks are to be ascribed and given to God as certainly when he employs the least and the most considerable Instruments, as when he uses greater. All these things appear so evident and reasonable, that it were but loss of Time to prove them. There is no Scruple or Objection to this Exhortation of the Psalmist; it is assented to, as soon as asked, that *They should give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered from the hand of the enemy*: We have therefore only to see, in the *Application*, what Reason we have now to give God Thanks, by considering from what Evils we have been redeemed, and from what Enemies we have been delivered. The Evils we have been delivered from, are all the Miseries and Calamities which constantly attend a Civil and Intestine War. These we must have undergone, as long as any Enemies would have appeared against the King, altho' his Arms had been at last successful: But had the Rebels prevailed, the Evils then must have been numberless and endless; the King must have been deposed and murdered, and so must all his Family that had not fled; the Consequence of this must have been, that no Protestant Prince must ever have ruled in this Nation again. The Consequence of that must necessarily be, the Establishing a Succession of Popish Princes for ever; and what less will follow from thence, than the rooting out the Protestant Religion in these Kingdoms for ever, and settling Popery for ever, in its stead? And what will then become in time of all our Laws and boasted Liberties?

These are not Consequences, which the *Proclamation*, for Observance of this Day, has drawn, and which I repeat from it only for Amplification's sake, and to beget Astonishment and Dread in People's Hearts, without Cause; but they are such as make themselves, such as are natural and unavoidable; such as *must* follow, if free Agents may act freely, and Natural Causes produce their Natural Effects: Such as are only possible *not to happen*, if God by a wonderful Power intervene not to hinder them; which because we have no Reason to expect, we have no Reason to suppose. And they are such as you yourselves shall be Judges of. Had the King's Forces been defeated either in *England* or *Scotland*, you are not to imagine that there had been an End of the War; more Forces had been raised and sent to their Assistance. A King and Parliament agreeing, are not so soon vanquished. I believe we have not one Instance in all our History, of a King overcome by his Rival Adversary, whose Cause and Title the Parliament did heartily espouse, as is the present Case; and therefore all their Legislative Power, their Interest, and their Wealth, would certainly have been exerted, in raising and maintaining Armies for supporting and establishing the present Government, from time to time as there should be Occasion.

*Examples*



*Examples* are only as so many Snares, to slight and inconsiderate People, who only view them on the Side they like: Because a *Revolution* in favour of the Protestant Religion, and of the Laws and Liberties of the Nation, was so easily brought about, therefore the hot and thoughtless Heads of the Conspirators, imagined such another might be brought about, with as much Ease, if they could work the People into Discontents and Disaffection to the Government; and a seditious Disposition by idle Tales, and groundless Calumnies, as ridiculous as they are false, and by revival of that senseless Outcry of *the Church's Danger*, of which they were never yet able to make one tolerable Proof, to the Conviction of any sober, thoughtful, and observing Man.

By these means, however, they have made shift to lead captive abundance of silly, noisy, and outrageous Women, and to seduce great Numbers of decayed, idle, and disorderly Men, whose Ignorance makes them credulous, and disposes them to swallow any Stories that are told them, tho' never so improbable; and whose necessitous Condition keeps them in readiness for Tumult, and to follow the Directions of such as secretly abet and favour the designed *Change*, in hopes of some Encouragement for the present, and finding their Account in it hereafter. These are the People for the most part, that, had the Rebels prevailed a little at first, would probably have risen in divers Quarters of the Kingdom, and joined them as soon as they could conveniently; and might thereby have made their Army numerous. To these we may also add, without doubt, a number of Men of better Quality, some of unmeasurable Ambition, some discontented and disappointed of their Hopes, others of broken Fortunes, deep in Debt, and overwhelmed with Mortgage, others obnoxious to the Government, and despairing of Forgiveness. A Body thus composed and formed, must needs be able to do an infinite deal of Mischief, to desolate and ravage many Countries, to burn and pillage many Towns and single Houses, to rob, abuse, to wound and murder many thousand People, innocent and inoffensive in themselves, but become *Enemies* by adhering to the Government, and not assisting the Rebellion. These things they must have been forced to do, within a few Weeks after they entered on this Warfare; for when the little Money of their own had been spent, and the little which their Leaders would have been able to supply them with, was also gone, what must they have done, but either starved, or fallen to Plunder wherever they came? They had no Fund, no Taxes to depend upon, nor Credit for Subsistence, nor regular Pay to look for: Those are all with the Government, and without them no Army can continue together for any length of Time, without depriving every body in their reach of all they have, and destroying all before them. Thus their Numbers would have made them *able*, and their Necessities made them *willing*, to bring upon the Country all the Calamities and Miseries of Civil War, how little soever of these Cruelties and Mischiefs, they may say, they intended when first they entered on it. Things will have their natural and easy Consequences, whatever People may intend, and the best Intentions in the World will excuse no Man for the evil Consequences, if they are natural and easy ones, and such as are usually expected. But after all, will such a mad, disjointed, unprovided Rout as this, be able to hold out against the Wisdom, and the Strength, the Wealth and Interest of the Nation, united in the King and Parliament, who have all Power entirely in their Hands, and who can raise what Armies, and what Taxes for their Pay, they please? I will not exaggerate things in the least Degree, nor say what the meanest People may not comprehend and think reasonable to believe. The Rebels might, upon a little Success at first, have increased in Number, and might have killed many thousands of the King's faithful Subjects, both in the Field and out of it, and have undone many thousands more in their Goods and Fortune. All these Evils were prevented, by the Blessing of God upon the King's Arms and Counsels, suppressing so soon the Seeds of the Rebellion; all those Lives that have



have been saved, all those Estates that have been preserved from this Destruction, are Matter of Thanksgiving: We who are faithful to the King, could not but have lamented the Slaughter, or the Ruin of so many of our Friends and Fellow-Subjects. Nor would the Enemies of the King have had less Cause to mourn than we; for certainly his Armies would have made as dreadful a Havock of the Rebels and their Favourers and Abettors; whoever considers the Strength, the Courage, and Experience of old, approved, and regular Forces, well officer'd, well provided for, and well paid, cannot but think they would have sold their Lives exceedingly dear, and would have taken ample Vengeance on the King's Enemies and their own, for all the Deaths, the Losses and the Abuses of their Friends. All these Evils are also prevented, by the so speedy Suppression of this Rebellion: And therefore here is Matter of Thanksgiving even for the greatest Enemies the King has, whether openly or secretly such; they must have lost as many Friends, as there had been Rebels destroyed and killed. The marvellous Compassion, the strange and hitherto unpractised Charity of publick Prayers and Tears, bestowed upon the few State Criminals, that have fallen of late by the Hand of Law and Justice, this new and unusual Tendernefs, I say, shewn rather for their Sufferings than their Sins, by such as approve their Cause, would incline one to hope, that they would join with us, as they have Reason, in Thanksgiving to God, for putting so quick an End to this Rebellion, in which so many of their Husbands, Children, Fathers, Brothers, Kindred and Friends, might very probably have perished: *The sword, as David saith, devoureth one as well as another*, and the Loss and Sufferings of their Friends must needs have been considerably great. And all good Men, who would unquestionably have lamented the Ruin of so many Families, on either Side, will certainly agree in thanking God, for the happy Accidents, that by his Blessing have prevented so much Mischiefe, and the Death of so many Fellow-Subjects, Men and Christians, whether Friends or Enemies to the present Establishment. It is not easy for an unexperienc'd Heart to conceive, much less for the Tongue to express, the Desolations, Miseries, and Calamities of a Civil War. And therefore the preventing all these Evils, is certainly the Matter of a serious and sincere Thanksgiving to Almighty God. That it is indeed so, I have hitherto shewed you, upon Supposition that the King's Arms might (as I think they would) have been victorious and successful at the last. But because the Issues of War are very uncertain, and abundance of little Accidents may intervene, which wise Men cannot easily foresee, nor consequently be prepared against, which yet may strangely change the Fortune of the Day, against all Reason, Expectation, and the Appearances of Things; and because *as the race is not always to the swift, so is not the battle always to the strong*, but Time and Chance happens to them all----Because, I say, of these Uncertainties, let us suppose the Rebels had prevailed, and they had been victorious in the Field, and see, what must have been the natural Consequences of this Success, that we may the better see, whether the preventing these Consequences be truly Matter of Thanksgiving, which is the End of our assembling here this Day.

The first natural Consequence of the Rebels entire Success, must have been the Death of the King, and the Destruction of the whole Royal Family, if they had fallen into their Hands. Without this, all other Advantages would have signified but little; *this* is the only wanted and desired Success of the Rebellion: Put but this precious Life, and Family, into their Power, and they will want no more, the rest will follow of Course. This is so manifest a Truth, that it can want no Proof. Not one who took the Sword but must have aimed at it, and intended this: Not one who staid at home, and wished Success to the Rebellion, but must have wished for this Destruction of the King, and of his House, unless they were so senseless as to fight for, and to wish for an Event and End, without intending either the necessary Means of compassing that End, or the necessary and unavoidable Consequences of such an



*Issue and Event.* Who can pretend to fight against the King, without intending to dethrone him, and to place his Rival in his Seat? And who can wish Success to such an Attempt, without intending what will naturally follow upon that Success? 'Tis just possible to abstract such Things in one's Thought, and to separate them one from the other; but 'tis hardly possible to reason one's self into a Belief, that such and such Things may come to pass without their natural Consequences. And therefore, they who secretly wished well to this Rebellion, must needs have wished the natural Fruits of such Success, the Death and Ruin of the King, and of his Family. And would not this be a very strange Return for a People to make to a Prince, whom they called to the Throne, and placed him on it with great Joy, and have seen him sit thereon for near two Years, so inoffensively with regard to our Laws at Home, so usefully with respect to our Trade Abroad, and with so much Honour with regard to the Princes of the World, that one would think the Mouth of Calumny itself should have been shut?

There is something so particular in this King's coming to the Throne, that it will deserve to be remember'd and considered by every one of you; for no King ever yet came in the like manner. He came not in by the Sword, or any Pretence of Conquest, as *William the First* did; nor by briguing with the Bishops and great Men, as *K. Stephen* did; nor was he called to it by the Nobility and Commonalty of the Realm, to correct and reform the Abuses of the State, and supply the Place of such as were deposed for Mal-administration, or had left the Kingdom, as were *Edward III. Henry IV. Henry VII.* and the late King *William* of ever-honoured Memory: Nor did he come by what they call *Hereditary Right*, as *Henry II. Edward IV.* and *K. James I.* did. But the Nation of its own accord, neither moved by any Fear of present Danger, nor by Gratitude for any Benefits or Service past; awed by no Arm, either near or distant; bribed by no Favours, promised or bestowed; but free, at ease, and in a Time of Peace; the Nation, I say, in these Circumstances did of its own accord, most voluntarily offer to, and settle the Crown upon the House of *Hanover*, the Princess *Sophia* being the next of Kin, that was a Protestant, Grand-daughter to King *James I.* in pursuance of a former Act of Parliament which excluded all Papists. In this manner was the Succession settled on the House, of which the King was Heir and Head: In this manner, and without his seeking, was he called to the Throne, by all the Nation, King and Parliament, and also afterwards by Queen and Parliament, if that will please some People better. So that if it be lawful for a whole Nation to secure its Religion, Laws, and Property, from utter Ruin and Subversion, by excluding Papists from the Throne, and lawful for them to bestow their Government where they believe those valuable Blessings will be best secured, there cannot be a better Title in the World than what the present King has. It is the Gift of a whole Nation to him, unasked for and unsought by him; and there were fourteen or fifteen Years betwixt the *Settlement* and its taking Place. So that it was not a rash and sudden Thing, but done with all Deliberation, and there was time enough to see if it were well done. This is the Title that is by all means to be defeated, this is the Prince that is to be dethroned and murdered. This is the Family that is to fly or be destroyed. The Nation must unsay what they formerly said with one Voice; they must undo what they formerly did, in the most solemn and deliberate Manner; they must break the Promises they voluntarily made, they must unswear the Oaths they have often sworn: And all this they must do without any Provocation or Offence on his Part, nay after many Benefits received from his good Government. And would not this have raised the Credit and the Honour of the Nation with the World Abroad, as well as have secured it at Home? But in good earnest would it not have compleated both our Infamy and Ruin? Such a Proceeding with our King and with his Family, as must have been the Consequence of the Rebels Success, would have made us the Hatred and the Scorn of all the Nations with whom we have any thing to do. They saw us not long since  
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basely and wickedly forsake our Allies, and with another sort of Baseness court our Enemies, and give them all the Advantages that God had put into our Hands, by a long and prosperous War; and now they would see us giving up our Religion, and our Liberties and Laws, by parting with the King and with his Family, whom we had chosen and pitched upon, for no other Reason but for the Preservation of that Religion, and the securing of those Laws and Liberties. Were this a Nation to be loved or feared, trusted or dealt withal? Is all their Zeal for Protestantism, all their Outcries against Popery, all their Love of Liberty, and Exclamations against Arbitrary Power, come to this? Who would regard so false, so foolish, and so changeable a People? Who when oppressed, cry loud for a Deliverance, and when they have obtained it, slight it and forget it; who dread the Enemy to-day, provide against him to-morrow, and throw away their Fears and Arms the next Day after.

This Nation had been frequently and strongly alarmed with the Fears of Popery in the Reign of King *Charles II.* who lived a secret and died a profess'd Papist. It saw it enter like an armed Man in the Reign of King *James II.* and being first frightened as it were out of its Wits, and then into its Wits again, it joined the Prince of *Orange*, made a *Revolution*, declared the People's Rights, and placed the Crown upon the Prince and Princess's Heads, with certain Limitations; and in the *Session* following, disabled any Papist for the future, from being King or Queen of these Kingdoms for ever after; *having found it* (as they express it) *utterly inconsistent with the Safety and the Welfare of it, for this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince.* And again, lest these Limitations of the Succession should determine, as indeed they did, with the late King and the late Queen dying without Children, the King and Parliament made further Provision for the Succession of the Crown in the Protestant Line, *for the Happiness of the Nation and the Security of our Religion*, and fixed it to the House of *Hanover*, continuing *Protestant*. And indeed it was absolutely necessary so to do, for there are no Protestants of that Royal Line of *Stuart* in the World, but what are of that House. This made me say, that the utter Subversion of the Protestant Religion in these Kingdoms, must be, in time, a natural and unavoidable Consequence of the Destruction of this House: After which succeeds an endless Train of Popish Princes: *First*, the Person that pretends to disturb our Government at present; *next* the Dutches of *Savoy*, a Lady growing into Years; then her Son the Prince of *Piedmont*, fourteen Years of Age, but very weakly and infirm; after them by the same Hereditary Right the *present* King of *France*; if these should fail, the three Children of the late Queen of *Spain* claim by the same Right, and twenty more that are in view, if it were worth the while to reckon them. This is the goodly Prospect that the Church of *England* has of Princes, that are to be its nursing Fathers, Heads and Governors, whenever we shall lose, by War or Treachery, the present KING and Royal Family! Under which of all these Popish Princes is the Protestant Religion like to live and flourish in these Kingdoms? Which of them all will not, must not, by his Principles, think himself obliged to destroy it, as soon as he is able? I make no question but Popish Princes are, in themselves, as tender and good-natur'd, as wise and considerate, and understand their Interest as well as any Protestants whatever; and where their Superstition is not concerned, they give good Proofs that they are so: But wherever *that* comes in their way, they neither can nor must do as they otherwise would, their sanguinary Zeal is too strong for their good Nature and Humanity, too strong for Reason, and even an Over-match for their apparent Interest: There is no trusting them; they may promise what they will, but they cannot perform what they will, their Consciences are in another Man's keeping: Whether they shall swear or no, is in their own Power, but it is not in their Power whether they shall keep those Oaths or no, if *Heresy* be concerned. There they may seek for Absolution from their Oaths, and there they may obtain it. No Oath can bind to Sin, that is very certain with



with all Men; but to favour and preserve the Protestant Religion, when there is Power and Opportunity to destroy it, is certainly with them a Mortal Sin; the Consequence is plain, it is to be destroyed when that Time comes; no Oath must hinder it. But Princes do not always act up to their Principles, nor to the Obligations their Religion lays them under: Very true. Look into History then, and see how it has been in Fact. And if they can produce but one single Instance of a Popish Prince, in all the World, who did not, as soon as he had Power and Opportunity, subvert the Protestant Religion, and do his best to root it out of his Dominions, we will then be content to dismiss our troublesome Apprehensions, and lay aside all Fears of such an Issue and Event. It would be a strange thing, methinks, for a Nation to venture its Religion, Safety, and Happiness, upon the Word, the Promise, or the most solemn Oath of a Man, whose Principles will permit him to break that Oath, as soon as he can securely do it; whose *Interest* it may be to break it, whose *Conscience* bids him break it, and who thinks he shall please GOD, and do his Duty in breaking it. This Man, notwithstanding all these Encouragements to break it, may yet keep this Oath if he will: But certainly it is too great a Risk for a Nation to run; and yet this Nation of ours may run this Risk, if we can find one Instance, one Example of a Popish Prince, who made and kept such Oath inviolable, when he had Power and Opportunity of breaking it.

Were I in any other Country of the World but this, I need not to have insisted half so long upon a Point so plain as this is, that a Popish Prince is inconsistent with the Happiness and Safety of a Protestant People; and that let him lay himself under what Ties, Obligations and Oaths he will, they will not hold him, when he has Power and Opportunity of breaking through them. For the Papists abroad know it, by Principles, that *Heresy* (and so they call the Protestant Religion) is not to be suffered where they can hinder it: And all the Protestants abroad know it by woful Experience. But here in *England*, within these five or six Years last past, we are put to prove every thing, even that the Sun shines at Noon-day, if it make against Popery; and after proving it, can hardly be believed, if it make against them or their Friends, by any Consequence. The People of *England* can believe whatever they will, if it be against the Government, tho' never so ridiculous, unlikely and absurd; but nothing against their certain Enemies, who are both secretly and openly attempting their Destruction, and making them themselves the Tools and Instruments of their own Ruin; tho' this is plain in Reason, and evident by Observation and Experience, and true in Fact; *i. e.* they can be brought to believe that a Popish Prince may both permit and protect a Protestant Nation, in the free Exercise of their Religion, when it is in his Power to subvert it and destroy it: This, I say, is against all Reason, and all Fact, against all Observation, and all the Experience of the World. And therefore if there be any thing good and valuable in the Protestant Religion, or any thing evil and mischievous in the Popish one, we have Reason to thank GOD for the Preservation of the one, and for our Deliverance from the other, *i. e.* for our Success against the Rebels, who, had they prevailed, must have subverted and destroyed the one, and settled the other in its Place; whatever ignorant, mad, besotted People may believe, or be taught to say, by those who manage them.

Our Laws and Civil Liberties must also, in a little Time, have run the same Fortune with our Religion, had the Rebels prevailed. It is not the Climate, Air, or Soil of a Country only, that makes a People happy; but the Laws, the Liberties, and Privileges they enjoy, the Security that People have, to possess in Ease and Quiet the Labours of their Hands, the Fruits of their own Industry, or the Inheritance of their Fathers and Relations, without being subject to the Pillage and Oppression of their insolent and arbitrary great Neighbours, or to the exorbitant Demands of their own lawless Princes. It is upon these Accounts that any Country, but more especially our own, is a valuable and desirable Habitation, whatever other Inconveniences

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it may lie under, with respect to inclement Airs, or to inconstant Seasons: Every body abroad admires and envies us the Happiness of our Constitution; but this, and all the good things that attend it, we must have parted with, had we been thoroughly subdued by our Enemies. Popery can never thrive under Liberty; nor can a conquered Nation expect to have its old Laws left them: The Thousands and ten Thousands, that must and would have been destroyed, in Defence of their King and Constitution, would have made it a Matter easy enough for the Victors to have changed the Laws entirely; and who indeed should oppose them? It would be absolutely necessary to the Security of themselves and of their *new Choice*; the present Laws are all against them, and therefore they would be against the present Laws. And who, as I said, should hinder them? The People that could and would, are supposed to be subdued; the rest are Slaves by Principle, and think they have Scripture for it. Laws that restrain a Prince, from doing what he will without Controul, are unrighteous Laws and null in themselves; *Where the word of a king is, there is power, and who may say to him, What dost thou?* It would be almost Pity that these People should not wear the Chains they seem to court, and are indeed so worthy of, if honest People could escape them. These are the Evils we have been delivered from, by the Success it pleased God to crown the Arms and Counsels of the King with, in so soon suppressing the Rebellion. These are the natural, usual, and expected Consequences of such a War as this, had it gone on. They have not indeed, by God's good Providence, happened to us, and so we cannot be so sensibly affected with them, as we should, had they come in View, and threatened us a little nearer. But in a religious Consideration of Things, the Mercy is the greater, by how much sooner the Evil was prevented, which would naturally and certainly have followed. Our King is not deposed or slain, our Army is not routed, our Friends are not distressed or ruined: Our Religion is not changed, nor our Laws and Liberties subverted. But had the Rebels gained the Day, these things, according to human reckoning, must and would have come to pass: The preventing them is therefore a most reasonable Ground and Subject of Thanksgiving to God. *Let them, then, give thanks, whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the enemy.* And I doubt not, but such as can consider Matters thoroughly, and who are seriously affected with Religion, who have any Honour and Esteem for a Prince and Family endued with all the Qualities that are proper to make a Nation happy, and who have any true Concern for the Welfare and Prosperity of their Country, both will and do most seriously return their Thanks to God, for this Deliverance. As for the rest, it is not looked for at their Hands; they would be Hypocrites, and so much wickeder than they are, by joining with us. They who have openly assisted the Rebels, they who have secretly encouraged and abetted them, with Money, Counsel, or Provisions, or other useful Favours; they who have wished and prayed for their Success, and they who have lamented their Defeat and Disappointment; they who have filled the Streets with terrible Outcries upon the Cruelty of the Government for executing a few of their Friends condemned by Law, but without any Pity or Concern at all for more than three times the Number of the King's faithful Subjects, who lost their Lives in the reducing them; they who express their Compassion on one side only, and care not what befalls the other---All these People ought not, as 'tis likely they will not, join in a Thanksgiving, for what has disconcerted all their Projects, and defeated all their treasonable Hopes, and instead of the Sweetness of Conquest and Revenge, has left them nothing but Rage and Despair. These People are some of the very *Enemies* we are delivered from; not indeed from their Malice, but from the Effects of it: The King's Enemies are not only they who appear against him in the Field, but they who sit at home and strengthen their Hands, by the Virulence of their Tongues, by their reviling of the King and Royal Family, by their inventing, feeding and spreading Calumnies and Slanders, by saying any thing themselves, and believing to appearance whatever is said by others, though never so improbable,



improbable, if it will contribute to the rendring them either odious or contemptible. These are the People that deal with the Name and Honour of one of the wisest, best, and greatest Princes in the World, as they would not deal with the Name and Reputation of a Neighbour, were he of any Worth, Substance, or Credit. Nor durst they treat their Equals, or Inferiors, as they treat the Royal Family, respected, honoured and beloved, by all the World besides. These People make us scandalous Abroad, shew us not only void of Reason, good Sense and Understanding, not knowing when we are well, or what we would have, choosng and refusing, desiring and rejecting, all in a Breath; but void of all good Nature also, and of all good Breeding, and of every thing else that becomes a civil and polite People. There has been, as I observed before, a very strange Change in the World's Opinion of us; five or six Years ago, we were the Glory of all Nations, our Friendship and Alliance was courted by every one, our Enmity was dreaded. We have been since their Scorn and Hissing, and Aversion; they despise us for our Inconstancy, and hate us for our Perfidy and Falshood. They deal with us now, as People do with one another, whom they must by Necessity deal with, and not out of Choice, with great Coldness, Caution, and all manner of Reserve; no Trust or Confidence, no Frankness, or Dependence on our Truth and Honour. The King was the only Prince who was capable of retrieving our lost Credit, and re-establishing our Reputation; his Probity, his Justice, Prudence, Firmness of Mind, and steady Conduct, are such as States and Princes abroad can trust to, and depend upon; and by a late most useful and most necessary *Act*, the Ground of their Confidence and Trust is now most happily enlarged; they can now depend upon both King and Parliament. And by these Means, if we be not wanting to ourselves, we are in the way of becoming again an happy, flourishing and honourable People. But these domestick Enemies of his and ours, are every Day destroying, or endeavouring to destroy our Credit, blasting our Hopes, dividing us at Home, and rendring us suspected Abroad.

The Success which it has pleased God to give the King, and which occasions our assembling here at this Time, is such, as has driven his and the Nation's Enemies, as far back as the Place from whence they first set out; they are in a manner to begin their War anew, and must accordingly make the like necessary Dispositions, and Preparations for it. They must revive the old Calumnies, and must add some new ones to them. They must retain again, in Pay, or Promise, or Encouragement, the common Beggars in the Streets, the poor decayed Traders, the vicious Vagrants, the profligate Libertines, and all the Prostitutes of the Town: These must again be lifted into their Service, and have their Lessons of Slander and Reviling repeated to them; to these must be added some of the better Fashion, but not much better Breeding; of better Fortune, but not much better Judgment and Discretion; of more Virtue, but not less Virulence, Rudeness and Outrage. These are the People who are to join in forming, and in spreading all Reports and Stories that may tend to keep alive, and to renew the Ferment of the People, to irritate, exasperate, and inflame them more and more against the King and Ministry, *i. e.* against their own Ease, Security and Happiness. These are the Means and Methods they have hitherto used, to bring about their mischievous Designs, and these they are still to continue using, till they can find another Opportunity of trying to put them in Execution: And therefore as we may expect to hear of all these Scandals again and again, so we may be the better provided against them, and know what Credit they and their Authors shall deserve. No doubt but we shall hear, that the Church is again in Danger; do not believe it till you see or hear some good Proof of it; suffer not yourselves to be carried away with Noise and Outcries only; call for some Evidence that may convince a reasonable Man. I have the more Ill-will to this unreasonable Calumny, because it is so groundless and so mischievous, because it covers so many villainous Designs, and cheats so many innocent



cent well-meaning People. I have lived myself in and about this City, fix or seven and twenty Years, and been as diligent and careful an Observer how things went, with relation to the Church, as I could; and was as much concerned in its Welfare as another; and yet I solemnly profess, that neither in King *William* and Queen *Mary's* joint Reign, nor in that excellent King's Reign when alone, nor in that of the late Queen, nor in that of his present Majesty, have I been ever able to observe or see, that the Court or Government had any formed Design to hurt or oppress the Church, either in point of Doctrine, Discipline, Ceremony, Privilege, or Profit. It is in possession of all the Laws that were first made for its Establishment; it has obtained in almost every King's Reign, new Laws for its Confirmation, Security, and Strength: It has obtained whatever it has asked, even to prevent some of its Jealousies and Fears. But still it has its Enemies; no doubt of it; it is in Danger still, and always was, and always will be, to the World's end; but in no more nor other Danger, than every national Church throughout the World is, always was, and always will be; from the wicked Men of no Religion, from the Wickedness of many who profess the true Religion, and from all the evil Passions, Corruptions and bad Principles of the Men that compose the Body of it. Wicked Men of good Abilities will always be employed in all Governments; the Saints did never yet govern the Earth, nor ever will. They are the Men of Judgment, Languages, Dexterity and Skill, that know the World abroad, and all its Interests, and that thoroughly understand Mankind, that ever were employed, and ever must be used by States and Princes, whether they be virtuous or religious, or no; *that* is their own Concern, and they must look to it. Princes and States, if they will be secure, must have regard to such Abilities and Qualities, as are proper for their Service, and would, no question of it, be very glad to have them all virtuous and religious; but they must often be content without the latter, if they find the former. In Countries where the *Clergy* themselves are *Ministers of State*, and execute all the *great Offices* of the Country, why even there, there is little or no regard had in the chusing them, to their superior Learning, Virtue, and Religion, austere Behaviour, and a holy Life, but to other Qualities mentioned before, even such and the same as recommend *Laymen* to States and Princes, for their Ministers: And they do not think the Church is any ways endangered by vicious Ministers, if they be otherwise qualified by Faithfulness, by Diligence, and Application to their proper Businesses. I do not mean hereby to yield so far to the reigning Calumny, as to suppose the present Ministry to be a vicious one, beyond what has been before, for I am as sure of the contrary as one can be of any such matter. But I would say, that supposing it were so, yet is the Church in no Danger for that; which yet helps much to make the Outcry greater, and more mischievous.

I should not make an end to-day, if I must say, what I could say with great Reason, against this false and scandalous Calumny of *the Church's being in Danger*. But I will content myself at present with making a short Observation or two upon this Article. The *First* shall be, That not a Papist in all the Kingdom, that opens his Mouth at all on these Occasions, but opens it in joining with this Cry, that *the Church is in Danger*. He is as much concerned to have this thing believed, as the most sincere Churchman himself. They do not equivocate in this Matter, and mean by Church, *their own Church, but the Church of England*, which they would have all Men believe to be in Danger. And what is the Bottom of all this? Is it from pure Affection to the Church of *England*, that they unite in this Cry? Are they indeed concerned and touched with Grief, to think we are so nigh to Ruin? And would they in earnest help to save us from it? Certainly the Matter is not so, but plainly otherwise. They have a greater End to serve in it. They join in the Cry to make the greater Noise, to gain more Credit to it, to increase the Number of the Disaffected, to make the Populace more enraged and violent, in order to dispose them better to

Tumult



Tumult and Sedition, and lastly, to Rebellion. 'Tis for the same Reason that all the Enemies of the Government besides join in this Cry, and use their utmost Art and Industry to gain more People to believe it; they add thereby Numbers and Strength to their Cause, which may be useful upon Occasion.

The other Observation I will make under this Head shall be----That the Cry of the Church's Danger ceased intirely for the three or four last Years of the late Queen, when a new set of Men were employed in the Ministry, some of the greatest of which are now actually in the Service of the *Pretender*, and others vehemently suspected to have been in the same Interest. Under these People's Administration the Church was safe, it seems, and we were no farther alarmed with any Apprehension of its Danger; the Cry and their Fears ended together. Strange Fortune! That the Church should be only safe in the Hands of those Men, who had brought the State to the very brink of Ruin! I leave these two Observations of the Cry of the Church's Danger to be seriously considered: And only desire, that People would be so reasonable, as never to listen to, or believe such an outrageous Slander against so truly good and sincere a Prince, and those whom he intrusts with his Affairs, without such Proof and Evidence as are convincing, plain, and undeniable. He comes to Church himself, and his Behaviour there is handsome, decent, serious and exemplary; he has given his Oath, his Promise, and Assurance for Protection and all Favour to it; and whatever others have done to him, he has in no Particular either falsified his Word, gone from his Promise, or broken his Oath.

I have not Time to speak to the other Slanders which you have heard so often, and which you will certainly hear again; you may rank them in the same Class, for Truth and Probability, with that which I have mentioned: And I only desire you to take the same Course with them, *i. e.* to give them no more Credit than they deserve, by the Proof and Evidence they shall carry along with them. See with your own Eyes, hear with your own Ears, and trust your own Senses; think what is reasonable and probable, and judge indifferently of Matters; and if the People of *England* will do their Duty, I dare answer for it, that every Day the KING lives, they will have more and more Reason to bless GOD for bringing him to the Throne, and to pray that he may long sit thereon; and be succeeded (in his good Time) by a Race of virtuous and religious Protestant Princes, as long as we shall be a Kingdom of Protestants, that is, I hope, *for ever*.

A C H A R G E



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## C H A R G E

Delivered to the CLERGY of the Diocese of  
Ely, at Cambridge, August 7, 1716. at his Primary VISITATION.

WHEN by God's Providence, through the KING's Favour, I was (without any single Step of mine, direct or indirect) translated to this *See*, and intended according to Custom, to make my *Primary Visitation*, the first Year, I could not but think it very fortunate for me, that since we had lost the QUEEN, and, with her, all the Hopes that had been laid up in that precious Life, I could congratulate the Clergy of this Diocese, with the Succession of the *House of HANOVER*, which promised, according to human Reckonings, almost a Perpetuity of *Protestant Princes*, to govern, patronize, protect and favour the *Church of England*. A Prospect, that no Clergyman now living ever had before! For tho' the Children of King CHARLES the *First* were many, and five of them lived to see the happy *Restoration* of their Family, and of our antient Government both in Church and State, yet two of them were taken away within the Year, of whose Religion we were most and best assured. The Duke of GLOUCESTER died unmarried; and the Princess of ORANGE, but the Mother of one weakly tender Child, who then was little heeded in the World, tho' since, he lived to be our KING; and, if the Nations round about may be allowed to judge, one of the greatest Princes that we ever had. Of the three surviving ones, the Princess HENRIETTA was bred up by her Mother, and married into *France*, so that the Succession on that Side was what no *Church of England Man* could think upon, with any Comfort. As to the KING himself, he was quickly after married, to a Princess of great Virtue, and many excellent Endowments, but of a wrong Religion for our Good, and from whom the Nation in a little time had too much cause to think there would come no Children. This, by the generality of People then living, was accounted a great Misfortune to this Nation; and so it had certainly been, had that fine Prince, with his many excellent engaging Qualities, been but *sincerely ours*: But they who knew him well, knew he was not; and he himself, when all his worldly Views and Interests were at an end, confess'd he was not. Which justified what many Men boldly affirm'd, because they knew it so, before; what many more did certainly believe, but were more cautious in affirming, because of Temporal Inconveniences; and what many thousands more did vehemently suspect, namely, that from the time he came among us, his Heart was never truly with us; altho' the Date of his and our Misfortune in that Point, must be put a little higher. So that the Hopes of all the Nation, with respect to the Succession, centred in the Duke of YORK; of whom I need to say nothing, and of whom indeed I can say nothing better, than that he was the Father of two such Daughters, both our QUEENS, as did him Honour that will live for ever. Of these two Princesses, the one both lived and died Childless; the other died so, tho' she was the Mother of many Children, and of *one* who was of great Hopes, and of some Continuance with us.

This was the short and broken Prospect of Succession, that the Nation had for many Years; a Prospect that afforded little solid Satisfaction, to such as truly loved their Country, and wished well to their Religion, and could look before them. But this was all that could be had, till it pleased God, for the better Security of both, to put it



into the Hearts both of the KING and *Parliament*, to settle the Succession on the first Protestant Branch, of the same Royal Family of the STUARTS; which has now taken place, in the Person of our present King, who stands in the same Degree to King JAMES the *First* with *the late* QUEEN, the one by a Son, the other by a Daughter; the Popish Branches being all cut off, by the same competent Authority, as utterly inconsistent with the Welfare of this Nation.

This was the Happiness, upon which I purposed to congratulate those, over whom I was set by the divine Permission, at my first coming to them. And indeed, upon the QUEEN's Demise, I thought it was the greatest in the World that could befall us all, and that nothing else could make that Loss fit tolerably easy, on a Churchman's Mind. For what Condition should we have been in, had it been otherwise?

As matters now stand, and have long stood, the secular Interests of the Church are so involved and interwoven with those of the State, that, as I think it would be hard to separate them, without the hurting of them both (as all the Experiments that have been made that way have shewn) so I dare say the one can never flourish singly, without the other. And therefore, whatever the warm Heads and gay Hearts may conceive, imagine, wish, and talk, the sober and considerate ones will always find it to the Church's Advantage, to be as closely united to the State, in all its publick Interests, as it can possibly be, saving its Loyalty to Christ the Lord its Head in Heaven, in Matters merely spiritual. I did therefore think, and still do, that the Prospect of a Succession of *Protestant Princes* of such Continuance and Extent, as it has pleased God to set within our View, as it was of the greatest Importance to the State, so it would be one of the welcomest Subjects a Bishop could speak on, to a Body of Protestant Clergy, who would, I thought, be sooner sensible than other People, of so great a Blessing. There is nothing more establishes the Hearts of all sorts of People, of every Rank and Quality, of every Order and Degree amongst Men, than a good View of what is like to follow: Nothing that sets them more at ease and quiet, than to think they shall themselves enjoy, and leave to their Posterity, the same good Government both in Church and State, the same good Laws, the same great Liberties and Privileges, envied by all the Subjects in the World besides. And of all these Blessings there cannot be a better, hardly any other, Security and Pledge, than a fruitful Royal Line, of the same Interests and Religion with ourselves. To all these things, I thought, at that time, to have spoken at large: But being hindred from coming among you, something by my Attendance on the *Parliament*, but more by my Infirmities and bad Health, I had not the Opportunity of doing it; and think it seasonable, at this time, but just to mention it, in the Manner I have done.

Upon this Disappointment, I was put to bethink myself again, on what Subject I might speak most usefully to you; for as to all other ways of speaking, I would not use them if I could. And here the little Acquaintance I had with the Temper and Disposition of the People in general, and with the Learning, Manners, and Qualifications of those who make up the proper Audience, upon these Occasions, would not permit me to speak as home, and pertinently, as I might do upon a fuller Knowledge of the Diocese. It was therefore left to me, to speak in Generals only, and from the Excellence and *Dignity* as well as *Difficulties* of the *Pastoral Office*, to frame an Exhortation, both to myself and every one of you, to such a careful and conscientious Discharge, each of us, of our several Parts, as may answer the Ends of our holy Institution, and satisfy the Obligations we have laid upon ourselves, when first we undertook our Offices; such, in a Word, such a Discharge, as will support and comfort us in the last Day, when the great Lord and Master of us all shall call us, every one of us, to an Account, each of his Stewardship.

Of the *Dignity* and Excellence of our most holy Calling, the Scriptures have spoken so much, so plainly, fully, and expressly, that there is little Need of amassing



sing the Passages together, and repeating them to such an Assembly as this. And as for the Attempts of the Profane, the Scornful, the Witty, and Malicious Spirits of the Age, to vilify and bring it into Disrepute, they are no other than what have always been, and always are to be expected. Our Care must only be, that we ourselves contribute nothing to it, by our Imprudence, or our Negligence, our Ignorance or Ill-behaviour of ourselves. Religion is so useful and so necessary to the Well-being of the World, and so perfective of human Nature, that it commands the Esteem of all Men, and obtains it of all that are reasonable. There never was a Country, in any manner civilized, without Religion; nor have any of our Travellers, in their Discoveries either of the old or new World, found any populous Town or City without a Temple or Place of publick Worship. Nor was there ever any Religion professed, without its Priests and Ministers; nor Priests and Ministers without their Honours, Privileges, and Revenues: Nor, I may also add, were ever any Priests and Ministers without their Enviars, Maligners, and Traducers; who yet were never able to persuade the World out of their Religion, or the Necessity of Persons set apart for the Administration of its Offices. It is by no means new, or of yesterday's Growth, that Men employed in sacred Offices should be insulted, injured, railed upon, and evil spoken of; Complaints of that Kind are as old as any Accounts we have, and that in all Places, and under all Religions. But the Men of one Age suffer for themselves, and consequently are more sensible of the Evil, than they can be of what they read, as done in former Times: One or two Injuries that a Man himself feels, make deeper Impression than twenty Relations of the like, suffered by others; and his Complaints will be a great deal louder; but his Complaints will not be heard forty Years hence, if he be dead; or if they should be read in Books, they will not be attended to as less Complaints will be of one who suffers *then*. And so it is with those which we see with our Eyes; they affect us much more than those which we hear with our Ears, tho' credibly reported and believed. *Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this,* saith Solomon, Eccl. vii. 10. Complaints and Accusations of this Kind are older, we see, than any Books we have; the People of his Days were inclined to magnify the former Times, at the Expence, and to the Diminution of their own: The Reason is, we are not so well acquainted with the former Times, as with our own: History is one thing, and Experience is another; and Things at distance shew much less than those which are at hand. And indeed it cannot well be otherwise, than that the Effects should be near the same in all Times, when the same Causes are in Being and in Force. The Passions of Men are, generally, the same at all times; the Provocations that Men give to Injuries are much the same; and the Handles and Occasions that Men take hold of, differ not much, at different Times: And since these are, generally, the Sources of Mens Sufferings and Complaints, no marvel if the Streams run very near alike at all times. And after all, it may be, all these constant Railings at, Injuries, Insults, and Attempts to vilify the Ministry, may make one sort of Proof of the Excellence and Usefulness of our holy Calling; for were it not of great Importance, it would not be so much taken notice of; if it were not very troublesome to wicked People, it would not be so maligned by them. It is the constant Check and Controul that is laid upon Men of unsound Principles, and immoral Practices, by the good Learning, Virtue, Zeal, and Vigilance of God's more immediate Servants, that is the true substantial Cause, at the bottom, of much of that Ill-will with which they are pursued, and of the evil Usage they find at their Neighbours Hands; which is to their Commendation here, and will be to the Increase of their Reward hereafter.

These things I have been the rather led to say, that, if the modern Complaints of this kind should, most of them, be true; and Report, herein alone, no Liar; if Invention had no hand in framing them, nor Malice in improving them, nor any Artifice



tifice were used in spreading, feeding and fomenting them, they would not yet be any harder Reflection on the *Age*, or *Prince*, or *Government*, under which they happen, than Complaints of the like kind were heretofore, in other Times, in other Princes Reigns, and other Governments. 'Tis what is natural, 'tis what is usual, and common to all Ages: It has happened in all *KINGS Reigns*, in which the oldest of us lived; our Fathers made the same Complaints; and if we read still backwards, we shall find the same thing: Nor is there any Remedy for this Mischief, that is effectual: A total Stop to Peoples Petulance and Malice, is what was never yet found out, nor ever will be. It is not quite the same thing in *Popish* Countries, but it is not much better. As they have naturally and unavoidably more profane and impious Scoffers at Religion than we have, as having much more Provocation to deride the reigning Superstition of their Countries, with so many solemn Fooleries; so they do often fly out, and break through all the Restraints of Decency, and Custom, Law, and Punishment, and treat the Clergy with opprobrious Language and Contempt. And even in Countries where they have a Hell on Earth to torment Offenders against themselves in, as well as one to threaten Men hereafter with, which is not dreaded half so much ---- even in those Places, where the *Inquisition* rages, the Tongues of Men will not be totally restrained, but they will utter their Reproaches, and their Scandals, tho' with more Caution, Ambiguity, and a more guarded Malice: Which I mention only to shew, that no Severity, no Power, no Laws, can ever totally suppress these cruel and outrageous Licenses; and therefore that we are by no means to think our Case singular, however hardly and injuriously we may be treated by a perverse Generation. We may say, I hope, as *St. Paul* said of himself, and all true *Israelites* (making all due Allowances) *We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise: but as then, he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now:* And I doubt I may also add, (though it is not Scripture) *So it will always be.*

But after all, I think we cannot help both seeing and acknowledging, that God hath put it very much into all our Hands, both to conciliate and preserve in a great measure, that Love, Respect, Esteem, and Honour which is so due to the Excellence and Dignity of our holy Calling, by putting it into our Power, to execute our Office carefully and conscientiously, with as much Prudence and Discretion as we can. And indeed, unless we do our utmost Diligence to fulfil the several Parts of our Ministry, in the most serious, useful, and most edifying manner we are able, we shall not convince the World, that we ourselves do either understand sufficiently the Importance of our Office, or have it in that Honour and Esteem we ought to have, and are desirous they should have it in. As bad as the World is, Religion has not quite lost its Power, nor its Ministers their Awe and Influence upon People's Minds, if proper Applications be but made, in proper Time, and Place, and other seasonable Circumstances. As bad as the World is, it has certainly something to say in its Defence still, which were it exactly true, abundance of Complaints would be better spared, than made with any Noise. If Men accuse us of neglecting to discharge our Duties, or of Ill-management and Indiscretion in discharging them; if they accuse us of notorious Insufficiency, reproachful Ignorance and Unskilfulness in matters properly relating to our Calling; but, above all, if they can charge us with immoral Practices, in giving them a bad Example, we never are to look for that Respect, Esteem and Honour, which are only due to virtuous, learned, and discreet Clergymen. Let us look for what we will, the World will still have more Regard to our personal Qualifications, than to the Dignity of our Calling; they will not reverence us for what we should be, but for what they see and find in us. 'Tis so in all other Cases; let the Professions of *Law* and *Physick* be never so honourable, because so useful and so necessary to the Preservation of our Health, Estates, and Property, yet who



who knows how to value and esteem a Practicer in either of those Faculties, if he want either Skill or Honesty? if he either does not understand our Case, or does not use his Understanding to our Benefit and Relief? Nor would it alter the Matter much, if God himself had positively instituted those Professions; for no Authority, Command, or Power, can create an Esteem or Love, in People's Minds, of either Things or Persons, unless they find, or believe, that there is something estimable or lovely in them. The outward Marks of Honour and Respect may be paid, by virtue of Command, and must be if commanded, and are, moreover, useful to some Purposes. But if we would be inwardly esteemed, we must endeavour to deserve it, and lay the Foundation of it, in ourselves, in the Use and Exercise of those good Qualities, Abilities, and Powers, that God hath given us, for the Service and Edification both of ourselves and those who are committed to our Care.

It will not be at all to our Advantage, to tell the People, though from Scripture, with any Air of Exaltation or Authority, that we are Christ's immediate Servants, Stewards of his Household, Dispensers of his Word and Sacraments, his Messengers, his Watchmen, and the Shepherds of his Flock, nay more, a Royal Priesthood, his Embassadors, and Angels: Unless we can also say, unless the People also see and know, that we have, in some good measure, fulfilled the Parts belonging to those Officers, to whom those great Titles do indeed belong. Our Office is then only rightly *magnified*, when it is well discharged: And we only wear those Honours creditably, when we have gained them by our faithful Service in this Warfare. This is the Use we are to put these figurative Titles to, which are so frequent in the Scriptures; they are to put us still in mind, of being what we undertook to be, when we were dedicated to God's Service; just as the Name of *Saints* was to remind the Christians in *St. Paul's* time, of what they ought to be, and what they had, in Baptism, engaged to be. And this is the Use, which our wise and well-composed *Office*, of *Ordering Priests*, calls and requires us to make of them. When it has done exhorting us, *to have in our Remembrance, into how high a Dignity, and to how weighty an Office we are called, i. e. to be Messengers, Watchmen, and Stewards of the Lord, to teach, and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's Family, with other great things*, it makes this Use and Application of them-----*Have always therefore printed in your Remembrance, how great a Treasure is committed to your Charge----for they are the Sheep of Christ, which he bought with his Death, and for whom he shed his Blood. The Church and Congregation, whom you must serve, is his Spouse, and his Body; and if it shall happen the same Church, or any Member thereof, to take any Hurt or Hindrance, by reason of your Negligence, you know the greatness of the Fault, and also the horrible Punishment that will ensue. Wherefore consider with yourselves, the End of your Ministry towards the Children of God, towards the Spouse and Body of Christ, and see that you never cease your Labour, your Care, and Diligence, until you have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden Duty, to bring all such as are, or shall be committed to your Charge, unto that Agreement in the Faith, and Knowledge of God, and to that Ripeness and Perfection of Age in Christ, that there be no place left amongst you, either for Error in Religion, or for Viciousness in Life.*

You see where all our Honours, and Titles, and great Names end; and wherein does especially consist the Excellence and Dignity of our Office: It is, in being good ourselves, and doing all the Good we can to others, whilst we live in this World: To be continually endeavouring to save ourselves, and those who hear us. 'Tis, in behaving ourselves suitably to the Names that are given us; and answering to the Parts that are assigned to us, in the great Work of Man's Salvation: 'Tis doing, with relation to Christ, and to his Family, just as we think our *Stewards* and Dispensers of our Goods should do with relation to *us* and our Household, if we were qualified to keep such Servants: We would expect they should be found faithful, and careful



in their Business. We look that our *Messengers* should go as they are sent, and do their Errands readily, directly, and exactly as we bid them. Our *Watchmen* must be wakeful, have all their Senses quick about them, look too and fro, warn us against our Danger, and alarm us when the Enemy is near: Our *Shepherds*, we expect, should know their Flocks, keep them together all they can, search for the wandering ones, and drive them gently to their Folds again, and be exceeding careful of them all, to preserve them against all Beasts of Prey, and all infectious Distempers. The very Name of an *Embassador* puts noble Thoughts into our Hearts, and fills us with great Images; but tells us plainly, that he must be always careful, neither to say nor do, what may reflect Dishonour on his *Master* and great *Principal*.

Thus these Titles serve to instruct us in our Duty, and excite us to it. And when they operate thus effectually upon our Minds, they *make* us what we are *called*, and give us a Right to our honourable Names here, as they will, through God's great Mercies in our Lord, give us a glorious Crown of Recompence hereafter. And I need not say again, that without our Care to deserve them, and make our Claim good to them, they will not be barely vain and light Titles, but they will go along with us to Judgment, accuse, reproach, and condemn us, and weigh us down into a greater Depth of Misery.

Having spoken thus much to the Dignity and Excellence of our high Calling, and to the ways by which they will be best preserved and kept up, I shall be allowed (as indeed there will be less Occasion) to speak the less to the *Difficulties* that attend it. *The Form of Ordination* joins them closely, and makes the same Use of the Consideration of the latter, as of the former; and nothing truly can be better than that Use of it. *Forasmuch then* (says that good Form) *as your Office is both of so great Excellency, and of so great Difficulty, you see with how great Care and Study you ought to apply yourselves, as well that you may shew yourselves dutiful and thankful to that Lord, who hath placed you in so high a Dignity; as also to beware, that neither you yourselves offend, nor be occasion that others offend.* The Difficulties that attend our Calling may be considered, either with regard to the Qualifications that are requisite to the making a good Clergyman; or to the Pains and Care he must be at, to the well-discharging his Duty; or to the Trouble, Opposition, and Ill-will, that may arise, and he may meet with, in and from his well discharging it.

As to the Qualifications that are requisite to make a compleat Clergyman, if we should consult the Writings of some very famous Christian Bishops, and others, of old, and be obliged to believe them, without departing from them in the least, we should find them so great, so many, and so hard to be obtained, that as I am sure for my own part, so I may reasonably fear, that many of this Assembly, despairing of such Attainments, must have betaken ourselves to other Callings, who yet, I hope, shall give a good Account to God, each of our Stewardship. I have often wondred with myself, that Men who were as wise and learned, as they were religious, should write in so discouraging a manner; should represent it so exceeding difficult, for a Man to be qualified for holy Orders, that not one modest humble Christian, of five hundred, would presume to offer himself to that Service; nor many more, if others must also judge of them according to those rigid Rules. These Men were great Orators in their way; but it is not only a false Eloquence, but a mischievous one, that, treating about general Duties, raises them so high, that they become impracticable: So that what God commands us all to do, and by commanding shews we all can do, these Rhetoricians would persuade us few or none can do; and instead of animating our Hopes, give us Despair, immediately.

According to the Flights and Exaggerations of these devout and over-fervid Spirits, a very few People, were they serious, would ever go into holy Orders; which should  
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it ever happen, would be very prejudicial to Religion; though over-stocking the Church is also not without its Mischief. There was something like this happened, in the matter of the blessed Sacrament, which may partly account for it. For the two or three first Centuries the generality of Christians did frequently, even every Lord's Day, partake of the Lord's Supper; but this their Frequency did naturally abate much of their Devotion, in the Performance of that holy Service; which godly zealous Men perceiving, set themselves to write and preach upon that Subject; and, to raise the People's devout Affections, and revive their antient Fervors, said so many fine exalted things, used so many strong and bold Allusions, and lively figurative Representations, both of the *Priest*, and *Sacrifice*, and *Presence*, that they quickly made the Duty of Preparation so difficult, and the Danger of coming to that Table so great and dreadful, that even good People were afraid to venture, and rather chose to stay away, although invited to that Supper, than come without what was then made to be the Wedding-Garment. Thus good well-meaning Men do often cure one Mischief by another, and till they have tried, they know not which is greater. Not unlike to this ----- In the Days of Persecution, and when the Clergy were first sought after, and in greatest Danger, as they always were, we may very well presume, that they were not abundantly more in number, than might serve the Necessities of the Church; the Wisdom of its Governors would find it necessary to restrain all Forwardness that way, and to hazard no more than they needs must. But when the *Emperors* became Christians, and thought they could never be magnificent and bountiful enough, in building and endowing Churches, and in favouring Churchmen; and when the great Men of the World thought they could make no better Court to their great *Masters*, than by following their Examples; persuaded also of the Excellence of their new Religion, and that whatever they bestowed upon the Servants of Christ, was very acceptable to him, and would be rewarded by him: When this was the Condition of the Church, and growing daily better; when it became not only safe, but honourable, and advantageous too, to be a Clergyman; we need not doubt, but Men betook themselves to this Profession in great Numbers; as well those who came with a good Conscience, and most sincere Intentions of serving God in the Ministry, let the Times be what they would; as those who were invited to it by the Tranquillity and Peace the Church enjoyed; as also those who had their Eyes upon the Profits and Preferments which they hoped to find. And if, among them, there were many ignorant, careless, and neglectful ones, many ambitious, covetous, and very worldly-minded Men-----as we need not much wonder, so we may well imagine, that the Scandal which these People gave, and the great Fears that things would still grow worse and worse, if not prevented by some means, might move the Men of nobler Principles, of better Learning, higher Stations, greater Sanctity, and more austere Behaviour, to preach and write about these Matters, in such a way, as would, they thought, soonest repress that Forwardness of entering into holy Orders, which was likely to turn to no good Account. And this they would most naturally do, by overstraining every part of Duty, and running every thing to such a Height, that few could think of reaching it. They would multiply Qualifications, and magnify each Particular: Whatever was great and good, would immediately become *necessary*; and nothing below Perfection be admitted: The Treasure which was heretofore, in St. *Paul's* time, had in *earthen Vessels*, must now be put into nothing but Gold and Silver ---- This is, after all, but my Conjecture, grounded on some Hints left us in History; because I would fain find out some Excuse, for those Excesses which appear in these great Men's Discourses upon the *Priesthood* and the *Pastoral Office*; which were they to be literally and strictly understood, would frighten all, but very wicked impious ones, from undertaking any part of it. And I doubt I might say of the Bishops and Priests of any one Age, what old *Theognis* with  
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some Pleasantry said of the perfectly good Men in his ---- *He thought a Wherry-boat would hold them all.*

But 'tis very well for us, that these great Men's *Examples* relieve us, against the Rigour of their *Rules* and *Instructions*; for, after all they have said, they were themselves *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, and though very learned and very good, yet not so superlatively so, but that others might and did equal them. Some of them fled indeed from *Ordination*, as they would from Mischiefe, and *hid themselves* as from an Enemy: But they were found at last, and overtaken, and caught, and ordained, and made, by a religious sort of Violence, to undergo those Offices, and discharged them passing well, from which they had deterred both themselves and others, by the Representations and Descriptions they had made of their insuperable Difficulties. So that if any one be scrupulous and frightened at what *St. Chrysostome*, *St. Ambrose*, or *St. Gregory*, or others have said upon this Article, they may take heart again, at what they *did* and practised. I do not mean this, or say it, to the diminution of their Credit and Authority, in general: But I would have no body so much Losers by their Reverence of Antiquity, as not to reason themselves, and consider things in their own Nature, and with their accidental Circumstances, and judge, as those did who went before them.

The Pastoral Office was at first, as it must needs be, in the Hands of a few, and those sanctified and set apart to the Work of the Ministry by the Holy Ghost, and qualified in an extraordinary and wonderful Manner to discharge it: But this was not to be the constant Method of chusing and appointing Successors. The Governors of the Church were not long under the immediate Influence and Direction of the blessed Spirit, to shew them who were fitly qualified for the Offices that were to be supplied: But they were left to the Guidance of their Reason, and Prudence, Observation and Experience; and chose, just as the wise Men of the World would chuse, to fill up Places of Importance with Men as well qualified and proper for the Purpose as they could get. If they found good Sense and Understanding, there was no great Inquiry after Learning, because there was then no great Need of it, for they had generally but one Tongue, and that their Mother-tongue. The *Latins*, indeed, looked upon *Greek* much as we do upon *French*, the better Sort learned it for Pleasure and Accomplishment; but this, like other Parts of Good-breeding, spread not far. It does not appear that the *Greeks* had that Regard to *Latin*, even when the Emperors resided in the *West*, and were mostly at *Rome*. So that they were only put to learn to talk and read gracefully their native Language. In this the antient Clergy, both of the East and West, had a great Advantage over us, and all who followed them, who spend a great part of our short Lives in getting a little *Latin* and *Greek*, and are thought to have no Learning till we have Languages. I cannot chuse but think this to be a great Difficulty, and an Impediment in the Pursuit of other useful Knowledge; but yet it is not to be remedied; nor would it be for our Good to remove it if we could, because, throughout the Christian World, where it is most removed, there is the greatest Ignorance and Barbarism, and the Christian Doctrine most corrupted; as appears very much in *France*, more in *Italy*, and most of all in *Spain*: And in our own Country we all of us feel of how great Service it is to be accounted learned by our People; and that where the Fame is otherwise, our Credit is but little with them. But to return to what I was about ----- As Christianity prevailed in the World, and the Number of the faithful Flock increased, the Number of the Christian Pastors must increase proportionably also; and he who reckons that a great Number may be as well qualified as a small Number may be, may think he reckons with Reason, but will surely find he reckons wrong, upon Experience. Now if ten thousand People be absolutely necessary to the well-discharging a great Office, would it be Wisdom to require such Qualifications in each Competitor, as scarce a hundred



hundred of that Number could honestly pretend to bring along with them? Nor is it any more to the Credit or Service of the Church to prescribe abundance of strict preliminary Rules, when, if it would be served at all, it must admit of as many Relaxations; or to make a world of things necessary in *Profession*, when it must be content with the good Observance of a few, when we come to *Practice* and *Application*.

In this the Wisdom, Prudence, and Moderation of *the Church of England*, as in all other things, appears conspicuous: She does not prescribe such Qualifications as she can only wish and pray might be the Portion of all her Priests and Ministers, but such as she may reasonably hope they *may*, and expect they *should*, bring along with them; such as, with the ordinary Assistance of God's Grace, and their own Diligence, and Care, and Pains and Study, they may be furnished withal. An honest and an upright Heart, above all things, full of sincere and serious Resolutions of serving God in the best manner we can in our holy Calling, by edifying the People committed to our Care, both by our teaching and our living. This, with a Competency of Learning at the first, Hope of Proficiency, and Promise of endeavouring to increase in all the Parts of useful Knowledge, as we have Opportunity, the Church accounts sufficient, and accepts upon these Terms her Candidates for holy Orders. The Difficulties therefore of our Calling, as they imply the Qualifications that are previously required of those who are to enter on it, are not so great as to discourage Men of honest Minds, serious Dispositions, well-tempered Zeal, and moderate Abilities, from undertaking it.

As to the Difficulties that relate to the Care and Pains Men must be at, to the well discharging the Duties of their Calling; or to the Trouble, Opposition and Ill-will, that may arise, and they may meet with, in and from their well discharging it, they are not so great in themselves, as to frighten a Man of Virtue and Resolution; tho' accidentally they may be, and sometimes are, exceedingly great and many, partly through the Folly, Malice, and Perverseness of others, and partly from our own want of Patience, Temper and Discretion in our Management. But be they great or small, few or many---- I have not left myself time enough to speak to them now, because I have one or two more things to leave with you, before I end, which cannot stay for another Time, as the others may, should it please God to continue us to it.

The first is, *a Paper of Resolutions*, agreed upon at *London*, which, being to be communicated by me to the Clergy of this Diocese, I have caused to be printed, and distributed among you; in hopes you will read it carefully, and consider it, not as a Paper of course only, but indeed of great Moment and Concern to the Well-being of the Church. The Business of *Testimonials* is what gives us great Trouble; the Jealousies we have about them keep us constantly uneasy: And therefore since we must see and hear, very much, with other People's Eyes and Ears, and judge by other People's Judgment, we have great Cause to require, that all due Care be taken, in giving them, before they come to us; for afterwards, it is not often in our Power to examine and disprove them, nor, with respect to the *Canons*, wholly to reject them. But I remit you to the Paper itself.

The other thing that I would say to you, before we part, is, to desire you, at your Return home, to take your Time, and Opportunity, to instruct your People in their Duty and Allegiance to their KING, and those who are put in Authority under him. They may be told, that it falls not to their share to determine of Princes Titles, or to dispute their Rights: They are much better provided for; 'tis more to their Advantage, and their Safety, that they are only *to obey*, where the Supreme and Legislative Power bids them *obey*. They may be told, that the Obedience of the Subject is not to be personal only, humourfome, or partial, according to their Fancies or Affections----much to *this* Prince, more to *that*, and little to *another*; but con-



stant, uniform, the like, and evermore the same, to all Princes, commanding only what is lawful.

It will unavoidably happen, that one Prince should be less beloved, and inwardly esteemed than another, sometimes with Justice and Reason enough, sometimes with little enough, often with none at all, but purely from Fancy, idle Stories, groundless Surmises, raised and fed by artificial cunning People; but all must be alike *obeyed* and *honoured*, for that is for the Good and Safety of the whole.

It is neither wise nor convenient, to compare the Living with the Dead; for Sorrow and Loss make us as fond and partial to the one, as Joy and Interest make us to the other, and Truth is somewhat overlooked by both. But as far as a private Man can judge of Princes Hearts and Inclinations, their Dispositions, Qualities, and Powers, I venture to say it myself, (tho' I would not require it of you to say) that I think we have hardly ever had a Prince upon the Throne, that came better inclined or better qualified to make us a happy People, than he who now reigns over us. His Interest and politic Views must needs dispose him to the same; but they who know him well, expect it rather from his great Goodness, excellent Nature, Sense and Love of Justice, tempered with much Benignity and Mercy, Strength of Mind, Firmness of Resolution, great Prudence, and Experience in the Arts of Governing. But this you may acquaint your People with, because 'tis known to all abroad, that, before he came to us, there was not a Prince in *Europe* better esteemed by all his Neighbours, nor better beloved by his Subjects than he was, which, of all the Indications of a good Prince, is the surest and the most to be depended on. They loved him there, altho' his Power was bounded by nothing but his Will, because they saw his Will was ever guided by his Reason, and that Reason was the publick Good. They loved him there the more, the longer they had felt the Benefits of his good Government. They loved him there so well, as to grieve at his Accession to a Crown, because they were to lose his Presence by it, and feel the Influence of his Wisdom, and Goodness, at a greater Distance. They love him still, however, removed as he is, and distant from them, and meditate no Change, not only from the Sense of their Oaths and Obligations, but because they know no Change can better their Condition. Nor do they take the Occasion of his Absence, to traduce his *Ministers* whom he employs; but trust intirely to his Judgment in their Choice, assured, that he who means them nothing but Good, and makes their Good his own, will take all Care both to procure it, and continue it to them, by most fit and proper Instruments.

One is a great deal ashamed, to think that a Prince of so much Merit, and of so unblemished a Character, throughout the World, should want to be commended to the People of *England*; as if we were less sensible, less discerning, and less careful of our Interests and Happiness, than others are. And I am not a little conscious to myself, that such a Part as this, is not, without a great Necessity, a proper Task for a *Bishop* at his *Visitation*: But great Necessity makes things improper to become necessary. And is there not an evil lying Spirit gone forth amongst us, ranging to and fro, in every Shape, and filling every Corner of the Country with Defamation, Scandal, and Detraction, inventing things impossible, surmising things improbable, uttering downright Falshoods, misrepresenting Truths, mingling them spitefully, detracting from all Advantages, magnifying all the least Miscarriages or Misfortunes, and giving every thing a wrong Turn, and all to alienate the Hearts and Affections of the People, from the King's Person, Family, and Government? And as the way of old was, for the lying Spirit to go forth, and deceive, by the Mouth of the *false Prophets*; so, where that has not happened now, but where the People, notwithstanding, are deceived, whence can the Truth proceed with more Advantage, than from the *faithful honest Prophets* Mouth, to meet with, silence, and repress, these Evil-speakings, Lies, and odious Slanders?

And



And since, it is presumed, I speak to none, but such as have already given the KING all the Security the Laws require, by sundry, and by frequently repeated Oaths, I know that what I ask cannot appear unreasonable. It is but what those Oaths do naturally require; for, as our Prayers to God for any thing we want, suppose our best Endeavours going with them, to obtain it; so must our Oaths be evermore accompanied by such a Measure and Degree of *Activity* to the fulfilling them, as is suitable and proper to the Office, Place, and Station, we bear in the Commonwealth; which is, undoubtedly, to set the People right, in their mistaken Notions; remove their Prejudices, and clear them of those ill Impressions, which false and wicked Men have, without and against all Reason, most maliciously made upon their Minds. 'Tis what our true Interest, as we are an *established Church*, calls for, as much as our Duty; our Enemies fear nothing more than our exerting ourselves, and our Friends expect nothing less at our Hands. Our very *Silence*, where these Scandals are so loud, will not be looked upon as the Effect of peaceable and quiet Dispositions only, even by such as are most favourable to us, but as Coldness and Indifference: But by such as are less friendly to our Order, it will be looked on as Connivance and good Will, restrained by Fear and Doubt of the Event: But by our Enemies, it will be construed, as it naturally looks, like nothing less than Favour and Encouragement. And, in truth, I seriously believe, that neither our Enemies abroad, nor those we have at home, have grounded their past Hopes, or do ground their present or their future ones, of succeeding in their Attempts, on any one thing in the World *more*, than upon what they have partly seen themselves, and still see, and on the Representations that are made to them by others (with great Enlargements we may well presume) of the Silence, heartless Inactivity, Coldness, Indifference, and the languid Zeal, of those Ecclesiasticks who are, truly, in the Interest of the Government on the one side; and on the other side, upon the Numbers, Strength and Influence of such as they believe are hearty Well-wishers, Favourers and Advancers of that Cause, as far as is consistent with their Safety from the Laws. And should these People reckon right, there would be Ground enough for much of their Confidence: For every one has had Experience enough of late, to shew him, how considerable the Power of such a Body of Men is; and of how great Use and Service it is, when rightly and well exerted, and again, how formidable when ill directed. But it is in the Power of every one of us, to convince these People, that they reckon wrong, and are deceived, *at least in one*. 'Tis much to their Advantage to have the Calumny believed, and spread: 'Tis just as much to ours, to shew it is a Calumny, and that they are mistaken; by letting People know (as there is need) that they must be, as we ourselves are, good *Englishmen*, good *Protestants*, and *faithful Subjects* to the KING, according to the Laws of God, and of the Land, and the most solemn Obligation of their Oaths. And in this Hope I will take my Leave of you for this Time, beseeching God to bless us, every one of us, in the Discharge of our good Office; that when we have gone through this troublesome unthankful World, we may give an Account to him, both of ourselves, and all committed to our Care, with Joy and not with Grief, and may receive that *Euge*, at our Master's Hands, which is a thousand thousand Times above all earthly Honours and Preferments, *Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*.

POSTSCRIPT.



## P O S T S C R I P T.

*Good Brother,*

**B**EFORE these Sheets were quite finished at the *Press*, I received a Letter, from the *Deputies of the Episcopal Reformed Churches in Great Poland, and Polish Prussia, and of the Episcopal Betlenian College in Transylvania*; wherein they earnestly intreat me, after the Example of *his Grace my Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*, and my Lord of *London*, to recommend the most deplorable Estate those Churches and that College are now in, to the charitable Consideration of the Reverend Clergy of *my Diocese*. The Request was so reasonable, and the Example so good, that I complied with it, and followed it immediately; and gladly took the Opportunity of conveying my Desires to you, on their Behalf, together with *my Charge*, as soon as it could be.

The KING, of his great Goodness, hath been moved to grant a general *Brief*, for the Relief of these distressed People, which will give you a full Account of their unspeakable Sufferings past and present, and what farther Miseries they are like to undergo, unless supported by us. This *Brief* will come amongst you, about a Month hence: But I hope and desire you will, in some of the Interim, use your Endeavours to dispose your People to a more than ordinary Liberality in contributing to the Necessities of these our Christian Brethren, of the same Household of Faith with us. And I intreat you to take care, to make as good Dispatch in this Collection as you well can, because these Necessities are so very strong and pressing on the poor Sufferers.

*I am,*

*Good Brother,*

*Your affectionate Friend,*

*and humble Servant in our Common Lord,*

*Ely, Aug. 30,*  
1716.

W. ELY.



## P A P I S T S

Not excluded from the THRONE

## Upon the Account of RELIGION.

Being a Vindication of the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bangor's [*Dr. HOADLEY'S*] *Preservative*, &c. in that Particular.

*Parishioner.* **G**OOD-morrow, worthy Sir; having received a great many civil Favours at your Hands, and profited (as I thought) very much under your Ministry, I come to return you my hearty Thanks, and to take my Leave of you.

*Minister.* You are very welcome, Sir, to any thing I have done, or may do for you in my Way: But are you then about to leave the Parish where you have lived so long, and thriven so well? But every one understands his own Business best; I wish you good Success wherever you go.

*Parish.* No, Sir; I do not leave my Business, nor my Parish; but I must come no more to your Church.

*Minist.* I am very sorry for that, because you have been hitherto a constant Man at coming, and very well behaved when there: What is the matter, pray?

*Parish.* Why truly, Sir, to speak plain, I am now told you are *no Minister of Christ*, your Sacraments *no Sacraments*, your Prayers an *Abomination*: You are a *Schismatick*, and all who communicate with you are involved in the Guilt of that most dreadful Sin.

*Minist.* Is that the Case? Hard Fortune certainly, that I, whose Duty it is, and whose hearty Desire it is, to forward the Salvation of every Soul within my Parish, should be the Cause of their Damnation, and yet neither they nor I should know a word of the Matter!

Pray tell me how I came to be a Schismatick.

*Parish.* Why, by holding Communion with the late Bishop of *London*, who was a Schismatick.

*Minist.* And how came he to be a Schismatick?

*Parish.* By holding Communion with *Dr. Tillotson*, who was an *Intruder* into the Archbishoprick, which was full before with *Dr. Sancroft*, who was unjustly deprived by Act of Parliament for not taking the Oath of Allegiance to King *William* and Queen *Mary*; and there is the whole of the Matter.

*Minist.* So that, by this Account, all the *Bishops* in *England*, who held Communion with an intruding Archbishop, became Schismaticks; and all the *Clergy* in *England*, who held Communion with those Bishops, became Schismaticks also; and all the *People* of *England*, who held Communion with those Clergy, were, in like manner, Schismaticks. Is not that the Way by which this Leprosy was conveyed throughout the Kingdom?

*Parish.* Yes, Sir, it is the very same; and a sad thing it is to consider it.

*Minist.* Sadder it may be than you think for. There are in *England* alone six and twenty Bishops, about twelve thousand Clergymen, and about seven Millions of People; six of which, at least, are, by this charitable Scheme of yours, involved in the Guilt of this great destroying Sin of *Schism*, and in the Consequence of that, not in a State of Salvation, without repenting and returning to the Church of the *Nonjurors*.

*Parish.* Sir, I am told that *I am not to mind Consequences*, let those look to it who will venture them.

*Minist.* *Not mind Consequences*, when the Salvation of so many Millions of our Fellow Christians is so highly concerned? Why is any Doctrine rejected, but for the ab-



fur'd or impious *Consequences*, that would follow, were it admitted? And does it not indeed startle you, that Six Millions of Christians should lie under the Weight of God's Eternal Wrath, meerly because the *Bishops* would hold Communion with Dr. *Tillotson*, who was put into Dr. *Sancroft's* Place, and the *Clergy* would hold Communion with those *Bishops*, and the People with those *Clergymen*? What Notions can you have of God Almighty's Justice, or his Goodness, that can believe he has made the Salvation and Damnation of a whole Kingdom to depend upon the wrong or right Judgment they shall make, *who is the true Archbishop of Canterbury*, He who is deprived by an Act of Parliament, or he who is put into his Place? Can you believe in earnest, that the Souls of my Parishioners should all of them go to Hell, for coming to my Church, joining with me in Prayer, hearing me preach, and receiving the blessed Sacrament at my Hands, meerly because I happened to think it my Duty to honour and obey my old Diocefan, own his Authority, and follow his Directions, altho' he held Communion with the *new-made* Archbishop?

*Parish.* Ay, but he was no Archbishop, there wanted a sufficient Authority to make him so.

*Minist.* Are all the People of the Kingdom then obliged to inquire into, to understand and to determine, on the Peril of their Souls, precisely what the Rights and Titles of Princes are? For what Causes they may fall from their Dignities? Who may take Cognizance of their Male-administrations? And who may fill their Seats when they are empty? Are these made any of the Terms of Men's Acceptance with God? Or may they not be very innocently mistaken in these doubtful Matters, which have, for so many hundred Years, both exercised and divided the ablest Writers? Are not Kingdoms as much at liberty to secure themselves from utter Ruin and Destruction, as private People are to defend themselves from Violence and Robbery? If a Prince will have his private Will, to the Subversion of the Laws, Invasion of the People's Rights and Liberties, and tearing to pieces the Constitution, must every one stand still, and let him take his Course, and finish their Destruction, without opposing his unjust Attempts? I will make short Work of it. If King *James the Second* was not to be opposed, the Nation must have been undone, the Laws and Liberties, and the Religion of the Country must unavoidably have been made a Sacrifice to Popery. And has the good God so declared it in his Word, that Sixty Hundred Thousand People must be as miserable in this World as Men can be, if they withstand not a Popish King's Design to make them so? Or be condemned to everlasting Misery in the World to come, if they do withstand him? Can you believe this is the State into which the great Creator has himself put them?

Those who perverted you, did very well to bid you *not mind Consequences*; for if you should, they durst not affirm such things, as in their easy Consequences must charge God with being most unjust and cruel. Well, if King *James* be no longer King, what must the Nation do? For *a King* it must and will have.

*Parish.* Why then they should have chosen his Son, and have preserved the *Hereditary Right*?

*Minist.* You are, I see, not thoroughly converted to your Party yet; for, by their Principles they could not have submitted to the Son, during his Father's Life. But what was the Reason, why King *James* could be no longer King? Why? it was because he was a *Papist*, and, *as such*, thought he was obliged, and did resolve in his Mind, and did accordingly endeavour in all his Actions, to root out the Protestant Religion; and because the Laws of the Land were all against him, and secured to the People their Rights and Privileges and fundry Liberties, which stood much in his way, therefore he attempted by all the ways he could, to subvert and overthrow those Laws; and certainly he would have quite subverted them, and utterly ruined the Constitution, had he not been hindered and put by: And all this he did as  
a *Papist*,



a *Papist*, by Principles common to him with all *Papists* else. And therefore the new King, Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons of *England*, all in Parliament assembled, disabled, disinherited, put by, and for ever excluded all *Papists* from being Kings or Queens of these Kingdoms; because being possessed with the same Principles, they would, whenever they had opportunity, attempt the same thing, namely the rooting out the Protestant Religion, by subverting the Laws, and overthrowing the Constitution.

*Parish.* Why then, by the same Reason, a *Popish Kingdom* might exclude a *Protestant Line* from succeeding to the Crown for ever, though next of Kin.

*Minist.* I make no question but they may, if they can alledge the same Causes, with the same Truth and Reason. I doubt not but a *Turk* may as innocently and lawfully torture and kill a *Christian*, to make him turn *Turk*, as a *Christian* may torture and kill a *Turk* to make him turn *Christian*. If the *Popish Kingdom* can affirm and prove, that the Principles and Practices of the Protestants are truly such, and have constantly been such, as are utterly inconsistent with the Peace and Safety of the Kingdom, the Security of their Religion, Laws, and Properties; if this can be as justly and truly affirmed of Protestant Principles and Practices, as it can of *Popish* ones, then it is plain that a *Popish Kingdom* may as honestly and justly exclude a *Protestant Line* from succeeding to its Crown, as a *Protestant Kingdom* may exclude a *Popish Line*.

*Parish.* But why should any one lose his Right, for being of such or such a Religion?

*Minist.* Why not for Religion, as well as any other Vice, or Defect, if that Religion threatens as much Mischief, and does as much as any other Vice or Defect? How can a Man help being born an *Idiot*, or how can he help the being a *Madman*? And yet you would not think much of excluding such People from Government. Now if a Man's Religion be such as makes him either useless as an *Idiot*, or mischievous as a *Madman*, why should not Religion be punished by Exclusion as well as Idiocy or Lunacy? Religion is not only in itself the best thing in the World, but it is a Word of so good Sound, that 'tis hardly ever mentioned without Approbation and good liking, till you join something to it that is *bad*. Leave out therefore the Word *Religion*, and let the Question be, Why should a Man lose his Kingdom, who is persuaded that he ought, and is resolved that he will, whenever he obtains that Kingdom, subvert the Laws of it, and destroy all things that shall stand in his way, and hinder him from bringing all his People to think, say, and do, whatever he himself thinks, says, and does, in what he calls *God's Service*, by any violent and forcible means whatever? Put the Question thus, and you will quickly see (if this be the Religion of the Prince) why a Prince may be excluded for his Religion as well as for any other Cause whatever. It is, in truth, for the Mischiefs his Conscience puts him upon doing, for the cursed Methods his Religion obliges or permits him to take, that he is deservedly excluded. And after all the Noise and Outcry that is made, *What pity it is, that a Man should suffer such Loss for being of another Religion*, I believe there is not a Father in *England* who would not disinherit his Son, if he should renounce his Christianity and turn *Turk*, let the Son pretend Conscience never so much for so doing, and say he is persuaded that *Mahomet's Religion* is the truest; especially if this good Son should declare himself obliged, by his new Religion, to persecute and destroy his Father, and all the Family, if they would not do as he had done, whenever he had Power and Opportunity. So that it is but a meer *Cheat of Words* that People put upon themselves and others, when they say that no Man ought to suffer either in Goods or Person for Religion's Sake: unless that Religion be in itself pure and peaceable, such as will do no Mischief to Mankind, nor allow any to be done; it must hinder no Justice; it must dispense with no Oaths, nor break any Contracts, nor disturb Society, nor countenance or abet any Cruelty. For such a Religion as this, no body ought

to



to suffer, because it does not hurt but promote the Good of Mankind. But when what a Man calls his *Religion* shall put him upon doing, or allow him (unchecked) to do the same, or as bad things, as they who are unjust, unmerciful, seditious and rebellious do, why should not such a religious Man be punished as the others are? Government is as certainly and as much of God, as Religion itself (even the pure and true Religion) is; and Government may as honestly and lawfully over-rule the necessary Articles of Faith, as Religion may overthrow the necessary Maxims of Government. And therefore the Pretences of the one are never to be admitted, to the real Damage of the other. To do no Injury either by Fraud or Violence, to administer Justice, to observe Oaths, to stand to Compacts and Agreements, are such eternal Rules of Reason and Right, that Religion itself can give us no better; and if it gives us *any other*, to their Prejudice, we are sure it is not of God, nor ought to be received of Men.

Now, if this be the Religion of a Popish Prince with respect to a Protestant Kingdom, or of a Protestant Prince with respect to a Popish Kingdom, so that each of them shall think himself at Liberty, notwithstanding all his Engagements, Oaths and Obligations to the contrary, to break through all their Laws and Liberties and Privileges, to vex, oppress, torment and kill those Subjects that will not by fair Means embrace the Religion of their King; if this be the Prince's Religious Persuasion, do you not see there is as much Reason and Justice for excluding a Prince for *his Religion*, as there would be for excluding a Prince for doing all these enormous Wickednesses *without Religion*, or any Pretence to it? I never could consent that a *Bill of Exclusion* should pass against *James Duke of York*, merely because he held the Pope of *Rome* to be the *Supreme Head* of the Church of *England*; and believed *Transubstantiation*, and *Purgatory*, and prayed to *Saints and Angels*, and was a bigotted Papist; because I thought that *Princes* could no more help their Follies and Mistakes than other People; and because I thought that I myself ought not to be punished for believing and practising in Matters of Religion, just contrary to what he did. But when I considered with myself, and knew very well, by my Reading and Observation, that, by the Principles of Popery, he must and did hold himself bound to use all the Means he possibly could, not only to persuade, allure and encourage me, by fair Means, by Hopes and Promises of Advantage, to profess and practise as he did, but by foul ones also, by Threatnings, and violent and forcible ways, even to the putting me to Death by the Torments of Sword and Fire, when once he could obtain the Power of doing so, and could use that Power, without endangering himself, his Person and Dignity; then I readily consented to *the Bill of Exclusion*, and would never have had him possessed of the Power of undoing me, of forcing me, and destroying me, to profess Popery, if I would live in my own Country; because I was morally assured, that when once he had the *Power*, he must be made to have *the Will* to use that Power, to the Destruction of the Protestant Religion. The House of *Lords*, indeed, at that Time were of another Mind, and threw out the Bill, either trusting to his Humanity and good Nature, or else persuaded that whenever he came to the Crown, his Interest and his Oaths would assuredly carry it against his Principles, and the Persuasions of his *Confessor* and Priests, who are usually the great Incendiaries of Princes on these Occasions. Many of those Lords lived to see themselves mistaken in their Reasoning, and their good Opinion of him; and found by many mischievous Experiments, that neither good Nature, nor true Interest, nor Oaths, are to be trusted against Religious Principles and Persuasions, when once they have taken full Possession of the Mind. *Good Nature* is reckoned as a Weakness, when it thwarts a Religious Principle; and *Interest* is never to stand in Competition with Religion; and never did an *Oath* oblige to Sin; and therefore never can oblige a Popish Prince to tolerate Heresy, when he can safely root it out by Force and Violence: The Lords, I say, at that Time, would not believe these



these Consequences would certainly follow, from their admitting a Popish Successor; but they were convinced by Experience, that they both would and did follow; and therefore they afterwards agreed with the *Commons*, that the Throne was *vacant*, and to fill it with the Prince and Princess of *Orange*; and in a little Time after, excluded by Act of Parliament *all Papists* from inheriting the Crown for ever, declaring-----  
*They have found it utterly inconsistent with the Safety and Welfare of it, for this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince.*

Which is a Demonstration that the *Parliament* of *Great-Britain* believes, judges, and declares that Popery, with its easy, natural and usual Consequences, does incapacitate a Prince for wearing the Crown of a Protestant Kingdom; for what was it, I would fain know, that put that Prince upon endeavouring to extirpate and subvert the Protestant Religion, but his Zeal to propagate his Religion that was Popish? What was it that put him upon endeavouring to subvert the Laws and Liberties of this Kingdom, but his Zeal for Popery, because those Laws and Liberties were the Security of the People, and hindred him from propagating Popery? For if those Laws and Liberties were not manifestly and principally endangered by the Prince's being a Papist, (as such) what need was there of an Act of Parliament, expressly to exclude the Succession of any *Papist*, but rather to exclude *any one* that should endeavour to subvert their Laws and Liberties, whether Papist or Protestant? There was indeed no need of such an Act, if they had not taken it for granted, that whoever was a *Papist*, would unquestionably endeavour to subvert the Laws and Liberties of a Protestant Kingdom, as he had Power and Opportunity of doing it. In a Word, *Popish* Princes are excluded, not because their Religion is erroneous, foolish, superstitious or idolatrous, but because it is a false Religion, and a cruel Religion, and will not permit them to keep the Promises they have made, and the Oaths they have taken to their People, if those People are *Protestants*, and those Oaths are in favour of the Protestant Religion, and they are in a Condition of breaking them, *i. e.* if they can break them without running any Hazard. Nor is it only (for these Reasons) a *false* Religion, but 'tis a *cruel* and inhuman Religion also; it spills the Lives of Men, like Water on the Ground; makes light of putting Men to Death, with the most exquisite Pain and Torments, who are in all respects innocent and harmless, excepting that they are not *Papists*.

So that let Protestants be never so obedient Subjects to a *Popish King*, let them do their civil Duties never so well, pay all their Taxes never so justly and exactly, nay, fight his Battles never so valiantly and successfully, and fill their Places in the Commonwealth never so laudably and usefully, yet if they will not turn *Papists*, the *Church* will accuse and convict them of Heresy, and the civil Magistrate must execute them by Fire, or Sword, or Gibbet.

And after knowing all this, how absurd must it be to hear People complaining of the Hardship and Injustice of putting by a Prince from the Throne, *merely for his Religion?*



## S E R M O N

Preached before the KING, in the Royal Chapel at *St. James's*,  
on *March* the 2d, the First Sunday in *Lent*, 1717.

ECCLES. Chap. VII. Ver. 4.

*The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.*

**B**ECAUSE the Pleasures and Felicities of Life are very much over-balanced by its Evils and Misfortunes, the Wise Man had said, *ver. 1.* that *the day of death was better than the day of one's birth*; the former delivering us from all those Vanities and Miseries to which the latter brings us, and lets us in. And because when he says in the second *Versè*, that *it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting*, 'tis thought he refers in one, to that which answered of old to the christening of Children, *with us*; and, in the other, to Funerals; the one being usually attended with the Sorrows and Mournings of such as are concerned, the other with Feastings and Rejoicings; and the Places of each being properly enough called, *the houses of mirth and mourning*: In reference therefore to this, the Words of the Text import thus much; it is more for a Man's Use and Service to frequent such Assemblies as will afford him occasion to consider the Vanity and perishing Condition of all things in this World, than such as only give him present Mirth and Lightness. *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning*: Man is made wiser and better, by being exercised about sad and serious things; and he who is already wise, will think on, and consider the Miseries and Misfortunes, the Dangers and Calamities to which the Life of Man is subject. Whereas they who are vain and foolish, think only on their present Ease and Pleasure. *The heart of fools is in the house of mirth*; they are intent on nothing else; never considering where, or in what sort of World they live, nor what may possibly befall them; and consequently make no manner of Provision for themselves.

But to do right to this, and all such general Sentences (of which the *Books of Wisdom* are made up) we must be sure never to understand them in their strictest literal Sense, which is seldom exactly true, never useful: But we must take them in a sober and restrained Sense, and such as will best answer to the End and Purpose, for which they were unquestionably written; the propagating and promoting Virtue and Religion. It is not likely to be true, that all who are wise should be always meditating on, or conversing with sorrowful Subjects: Nor is it true, that they who resort to the House of Mirth, should be *Fools* for so doing. We are made for Joy and Gladness; the being pleased and living happily, is the Design of God in his creating us; a good Being could intend nothing less to be the Portion of the Work of his Hands; for wherefore should he make a Creature to be miserable? To make a Creature *capable* of being miserable, through his own Default and Obstinacy, and foolish Choice, will argue neither want of Wisdom nor Goodness, if he is also capable of and designed for Happiness: but to *intend* the Misery of the Creature, and to create him for that Purpose, is a thing so far from being done by God, that surely he is not capable of doing



doing it; 'tis a direct Contradiction to the natural Notions we have of the divine Bignity and Goodness. Nor is it thus with respect to the World to come only, but to this also wherein we live: No Man that has but tolerably worthy Thoughts of God, can think any less, than that he certainly designed the proper Happiness of all his Creatures, and that when they fail of it, there is some Fault somewhere or other, or some Misfortune by some Accident not to be prevented, or foreseen; the Permission of both which detracts neither from the Wisdom nor Goodness of the great Creator and Conserver of the World. Now, this being owned, that God does certainly intend the Happiness of every Man, and that this Happiness consists entirely in the Ease of Body and Ease of Mind, which we may call Pleasure and Satisfaction, 'tis certain that God designed we should be pleased and satisfied; and therefore *Mirth*, as it is the outward Expression of this inward Satisfaction, can neither be foolish nor unworthy of a wise Man, nor yet offensive to God. The Preacher says himself, *ch. ii. ver. 24. There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labour; this also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.* And *iii. 22. Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion, and who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?* Our Saviour did himself resort to the House of Feasting, and that to a *Marriage*, which is generally of the freest sort of such Assemblings. And, lastly, who can imagine Joy and Gladness to be in itself displeasing to God, the Desire of which is so innate to Man, that without the Hope and Prospect of it, nothing would tempt him to endure to live; but above all, since it is made the Motive and Allurement to the doing our Duty in this Life, as well as it is to be our everlasting Recompence in that to come? And tho' the Pleasures of the other Life will surely be of another sort and kind than those of this, yet there is little Reason to think, that the Pleasures of this Life, which are natural and proper to us, are not as inoffensive in themselves, when well and rightly used, as those in the other World will be, when we enjoy them. It is not therefore Pleasure that is in itself unlawful; nor is it in itself unlawful, to be always pleased and easy, were it possible; if such our Pleasure and Satisfaction do neither hinder us from performing any Duty we owe to God, our Neighbour, or ourselves; nor put us upon doing any thing forbidden by Reason or Revelation, *i. e.* no Pleasure can become unlawful, that is consistent with our Innocency. The Lawfulness and Innocency therefore of both our Love and Use of Pleasures, must come to be determined of and governed by the Laws of God, commanding or forbidding such and such Particulars: And whosoever reconciles his Pleasures with his Compliance and Obedience to those Rules, shall have them safe and innocent, both with respect to the Kind, Degree, and Measure of them: He shall be sure never to fix on Objects that are not proper and allowed, nor continue to use them any longer than is consistent with the Discharge of all his other Duties; and when he has secured these Ends, he may resort to the House of Mirth, without the hazarding either his Wisdom or his Virtue. Now, let it be allowed, that God who made us all, and gave us all those Powers and Faculties, by which we are capable of being pleased and entertained, and also made those Objects which we find so proper to please and entertain, and with Design (for ought that appears against it) to please and entertain those Faculties and Powers, let it be granted that he does not, as he need not, envy to us any Pleasure, and we shall quickly see, how reasonable it is, that all such Objects as are forbidden us to pursue and fix upon, should be indeed forbidden: We shall discern how improper it would be, how mischievous and hurtful to the World, that they should be allowed as to the Kind; and as to the Degree and Measure of using Pleasures lawful and allowed, we shall also see how fit it is, that the Excess of them should be restrained by God, when it is to the hindrance of things better and more useful, the Discharge of necessary Duties. And in this Sense, every one will see the Meaning and the Truth of what the Wise Man here says, that *the*  
heart



*heart of the fool is in the house of mirth.* 'Tis certainly for want of Reason and Understanding, that People place their Hearts and Affections on Objects unlawful and forbidden: Or that they pursue things lawful and allowed, in such immoderate Measure, as hinders them from doing what they were otherwise obliged to do.

This being then the Case with respect to the *House of Mirth*, and needful to be presupposed, in order to the avoiding many Absurdities, that would arise from the general Condemnation of it, it will be easier, in the next Place, to understand the other Part of the Text, *the heart of the wise is in the house of mourning.* And first, the Vanities and Vexations of this Life are generally enow, to force the happiest of us all, not only to resort to, but frequent the House of Mourning, *i. e.* to give us Sorrows and Afflictions in abundance. The certain, and the accidental Evils to which we are liable, are almost numberless; but the Wisdom of Men being rather seen in shunning and delivering themselves from them, than chusing and continuing in them, it remains, that the Heart be *to be made wise* by them, and improve under them: The House of Mourning is to be the School of Wisdom; a Place not lovely and desirable enough for us to choose, as being full of Damp, and Shade, and Objects unagreeable, but such as when we are driven to by Necessity, we may and should improve to our Advantage.

Our Pains and Sickneses may teach us many profitable Lessons; they may and should occasion us to inquire at what Door those Evils entred on us; and if we find it was by Intemperance and Excess of any kind, it may help to repress a growing Luxury, and bring us again to Moderation and Sobriety. And if they came by Accident, by Negligence, or by the Providence of God, we know not how, yet they may teach us to compassionate those who endure the like Miseries, but without the like Assistances, Support and Comforts, that our Condition may afford us, and cause us to be charitable, and to contribute by Advice, and Help, and suitable Supplies, to the making them as easy under their Sufferings, as they can be.

The disastrous Accidents also that befall our Estates, that deprive us of our Offices, our Places, our Inheritance, or the Fruits of our Industry and Labour, and send us to the House of Mourning, may also be improved to our Advantage, by causing us to call to mind, how we have used our Wealth and Power, in our Prosperity, whether with Insolence and Injustice, with Vexation and Oppression, or a Neglect at least of doing any good. They may help us to contract our Desires, and bring them within a reasonable compass; they may shew us the Vanity of our inordinate Sollicitude, in making Provision for the future, which so many little Accidents can disappoint; and they may teach us too, with what a little Cost our true Necessities may be supplied; and what a Point of Wisdom it would be, to be content with what we *feel* we want, and not what we but *fancy*, when we are much at ease and wanton.

The Losses also of our Children, near Relations, and Friends, that do so often drive us to the House of Mourning, may teach us also many Points of Wisdom, useful and needful to be learned. What pleasing Scenes do we erect in our Imaginations, whilst we are well, and compassed with those Objects of our Love! What mighty Hopes do we conceive, and what great Expectations do we raise within us! What distant Joys and Satisfaction do we propose and promise to ourselves, and give them, in our Fancy, Years, and Strength, and Health, and Wit, and Honours and Employments, and every thing we like and love, which they shall never have, but die away upon the sudden, unaccountably. There is nothing in which the Imagination is more befooled, and the weak Heart imposed upon, than by those fond Hopes of future Satisfaction and Delight, which we treasure up in Vessels so perishable as human Bodies. A thousand natural and a thousand accidental Evils, may, and do quickly put an end to the most valued Lives, and all the vain Amusements that respected them. This is a thing so fixt and sure, that few, if any, that were  
ever



ever capable of being afflicted in this Point, but have indeed been so: This is the forest, but withal the commonest Evil under the Sun; these sort of Sufferings are the sharpest, yet most unavoidable of all others: No Losses do so overwhelm the Mind, and leave us destitute of all Relief, as these, by bidding us despair immediately; whereas the rest still leave us *Hope* to live upon, by which we please and cheat ourselves into Belief, that things may mend upon our hands. This is the widest Gate of all the House of Mourning, and almost always open. But 'tis great pity we should pass so often through it, without considering and observing, that much of all those Sorrows that oppress us upon these Occasions, is laid upon ourselves, not by our *natural* Tenderness and Sensibility, but by our artificial and acquired Weakness. Reason indeed plays but the Hypocrite, when she pretends to silence, by her Arguments, the Cries of Nature, her just Compassions, Sorrows, and Complaints upon her Losses; and truly, Religion has not much to do in such like Cases, and is not the most discreetly used, when brought to serve such Purposes. But when this is allowed, all must acknowledge, that to our natural Weakness, we also often add an artificial one; we strangely increase our natural Affections, by studied Fondnesses, unnecessary Kindness, and by Customs of Indulgence: Instead of fortifying ourselves by sober Considerations, and prudent Usages, we give all way to our Inclinations, and acquire, by Time, a Niceness of Constitution, and a Sensibility that does not properly belong to us; and by these means we come to be more pain'd and miserable by much, than we need to be. The House of Mourning is a proper Place to rectify these Errors and Miscarriages in, in order to prevent the like for the future; for there we feel the Uneasiness that our Neglect of what is past has given us, and there may form our Resolutions to be wiser and kinder to ourselves than we have been, by placing our Affections, and managing them so for the time to come, that it may not be in the Power of so many Casualties, and certain Evils, to give us such Disturbance and Inquietude, such Pain and inexpressible Concern: Since 'tis so certain, that according to the undue Hopes we have entertain'd, will be our Disappointment and Defeat; and our imaginary Pleasures be followed by most real and substantial Grief and Misery.

They who have any thing to lose, should learn these Lessons; for the Heart will be sad to no Purpose, if it will not be made wiser by its Sufferings; for it neither is, nor can be a Point of Wisdom, to afflict one's self, or willingly to be afflicted, unless it be in order to some Good, that is greater than the Ease we part with for it. So that the Heart is to be made wise, and exercise its Wisdom, in the House of Mourning, and turn its Sorrows and Misfortunes to the best account. And the House of Mourning is fitted, we see, to give us Opportunities of making these Improvements.

But because the Wisdom that is praised by *Solomon*, in all his Books, and to which he invites and exhorts all Men in general, is certainly the Wisdom of being Virtuous and Religious, of fearing God and keeping his Commandments (there being indeed no other Point of Wisdom, of which *all Men* are capable, and which is fit for all) it will be requisite to see, in the next Place, how the Heart is capable of improving in this holy Wisdom, *in the house of mourning*. And first, the Occasions that bring us to that House, do generally give us a serious Frame of Thought, our Minds are more compos'd and fixed, called home, as it were, and disengaged from all those pleasing Entertainments, that hindered them from settling where they often should: The busy fluttering Spirits that in our Gaiety and Ease transported us from one diverting Object to another, are now evaporated and laid, and we are much at leisure and disposed to fix our Hearts and Thoughts upon the things that most concern us. And when we are thus reduced to this considerate Temper and Sobriety of Mind, the next good thing that we are put to do, is to reflect upon the Conduct of our Life past, to call to mind the Sins and Offences that we have committed. This indeed we are



constrained to do, and cannot easily avoid the doing: It would be hard for any one to recollect the Actions of his Life past, without the meeting with a great many Sins and Offences: And then is it a proper time to set upon repenting of them, for then is the Mind humbled and brought low, then is the Heart softened and made more susceptible of Impressions, then is the Memory more distinct and faithful, then is the Conscience more awakened and disturbed, and then more apprehensive of its Danger; all which are natural Dispositions to Repentance: And therefore Afflictions are the Instruments, and Means God often uses to bring us to it. Whilst Men are healthy and at ease in their Concerns, they are either heedless or obdurate, and either way regardless of their Hazard, and impenitent: But urged by some severe and sharp Remembrancer, some painful Loss, or heavy Disappointment, they melt and grow more tractable and more considerate. *When he slew them, then they sought him, and turned them quickly and enquired after God,* saith the Psalmist of the Jews; the gentle Methods he had taken, moved them not, but some of his avenging Visitations stirred up their Remembrance, and brought them for the present to themselves, and a Sense of their Duty: And of himself he saith, *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word,* cxix. 67. and ver. 71. *It is good for me that I have been in trouble, that I might learn thy statutes,* i. e. remember them, and learn to observe them better for the future: And 75. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou, of very faithfulness, hast caused me to be troubled.* He never could have said these things of Troubles and Afflictions, unless he had improved under them, and become wiser and better by them; unless he had made them the Opportunities of calling his Ways to Remembrance, and of repenting in earnest of his Sins; for doubtless Troubles and Afflictions are in themselves good for nothing, but very justly every one's Aversion. *No chastening,* saith the Author to the Hebrews xii. 11. *for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.* This is true of all Afflictions, come they from whence or whom they will, and with whatever End and Purpose; they are none of them desirable, but all the contrary: Unless they who are exercised thereby bring forth the Fruits of Righteousness, it is no matter from what hand they come; the Chastenings of a Father are as the Wounds of any Enemy: The End and Purpose of him who inflicts them does not remove their Pain, nor make them less a Punishment. And therefore no body can make Advantage or good use of Afflictions, but by being bettered and amended by them. It is this Improvement of them that gives these Sentences their Truth, that *it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart;* for if the Living do not take occasion thence to consider seriously of Death, and to prepare themselves for it, their going to the House of Mourning, is but so much Time, and Ease, and Labour, lost in fruitless Sufferings and Complaints. *Sorrow,* he also says, *is better than laughter, because by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better;* but if *this* do not follow, *that* will be hardly true; if the Heart be not indeed made better, Sorrow is but so much Trouble, uneasy and unuseful. And these things also shew, that when the Heart of the Wise is said to be in the House of Mourning, it is meant, that there is the Heart *to be made wise*, and there to exercise its Wisdom; and that it never will be wise, unless it make these Uses of its Losses and Afflictions.

But *the house of mourning* signifying that State of Consideration, and serious grave Reflexion, into which our real Troubles bring us, as well as the Troubles themselves, the Heart of them that are already wise, may sometimes choose to enter into it, to the securing and continuing, as well as to the increasing of their Wisdom. A wise Man cannot fail of being often serious, thoughtful, and considerate: He will not only meet with many unavoidable Occasions of being so, but he will not always try to shun them,



them, by turning aside into the House of Mirth and Feasting, altho' he may both enter and abide there innocent. Misfortunes are so various and so frequent, that tho' a wise Man will not live in constant expectation of them, yet he will hardly be surprized or suddenly oppressed by them; he will be watchful, and so keep them in his Mind, as things that may befall him, tho' at distance, and in some measure be prepared against them. Our natural Inclination, Bias, and Tendency to Pleasures is so strong, and the Corruption of our Heart so great, that if our Care be not proportionably great, we are in all the Danger of the World, both of indulging to Excess those that are lawful and allowed, to the neglect of our other Duties, and also of falling into those that are unlawful and forbidden, to the express Contempt of God's Commands. The Confines of Innocence are parted from those of Guilt, by a Line that is almost imperceptible, and very quickly transgressed: And therefore unless we will be content to lay a voluntary Restraint upon ourselves, and be wise, without a Law, we are in too much hazard of miscarrying. There is indeed, in such a World as we inhabit, in the midst of so many Temptations as we are encompassed with, and with such Hearts within as are always ready to join our Enemies without, there is all the need in the World of being sober, thoughtful, and considerate, careful, diligent, and well employed, to keep ourselves in tolerable Innocence, or to reduce us to Repentance, when we have offended.

Under the Sense of this their hazardous Estate, many good Christians did of old forsake the World, deny themselves a great many lawful Pleasures and Conveniences of Life; betook themselves to Solitude and close Retirement, gave themselves up to assiduous Prayer, laborious Watchings, and underwent a great many painful Austerities, in macerating Fasts, and other Mortifications. They made to themselves *houses of mourning*, and dwelt much in them; as well to bewail their past Offences, as to secure their Innocence and Virtue for the future. They did, in a Word, intend hereby to make their Hearts better, and wise to Salvation. And if they placed no Merit in these things, but only took them up, as Means which they thought useful to the attaining their great End, without imposing them on others, they ought to meet with neither Blame nor Censure. Every one is presumed to study and to understand his own Temper, Constitution and Necessities, best; to know where they are feeblest, and in what Points they stand confirmed and strong; and therefore much must needs be left for every body to determine for themselves; and therefore they who spend more Time, and take more Pains to subdue their Desires, and keep themselves in good Order, than others do, are not rashly to accuse *those* others of Neglect or Breach of Duty; nor should those others as rashly condemn *them*, of needless Scruple and Superstition: For each may do what they find necessary for themselves, in order to the same good End.

But lest our Fondness and Self-love, together with that Listlessness to enter upon any thing we apprehend uneasy, which most of us bear about us, should hinder or delay too long our undertaking that most necessary Work of Consideration, Recollection and Repentance, our Church itself hath set apart and consecrated a Time and Season proper for such Purpose, and hath prudentially prescribed to all her Children, Meditation, Prayer and Fasting, as the Means and Method of attaining that good End, which all of us pretend to aspire after. She hath erected, as it were, this temporary House of Mourning, wherein she would oblige us *annually* to enter, and to do those good Works, she fears would not be done without it; the making the Heart wiser and better; the calling to Mind our past Offences; the seriously bewailing and repenting of them; asking of God, with all Humility, his Pardon and Forgiveness; purposing stedfastly to lead a new and better Life; to follow the Commands of God, and from thenceforth to walk according to his Will: These are the Resolutions and the Works she would have us entertain ourselves withal, *this sober Season*. Our Saviour passed whole Nights in Prayer, and fasted forty Days and forty Nights, as *Moses* and



and *Elias* did before him; for wise and useful Purposes, no question; which yet it hath not pleased God to acquaint us with, or to discover to us. We know he did it *for our sake*, but not for our Example, because it was a supernatural and miraculous Performance, and could not be followed by us; as neither were the *Jews* obliged to try to imitate their Lawgiver and Prophet, altho' they fasted often, as appears in the New Testament, in our Saviour's Days, when the Practice of it became a Pretence and Shew of great Sanctity, and a Veil of great Hypocrisy, covering bad Designs. But for the sake of this Example of our Lord, the number of forty Days was certainly pitch'd upon; and placed on purpose, at this Season, before his Resurrection, to take in the Time of his Death and Sufferings, that those might be the especial Subjects of our Meditation. Not that we should spend that Time in vain and fruitless Sorrows, for those Wounds and Stripes by which our Souls are healed, and for that Death by which we are redeemed from Misery (for we had mourned with Reason, had they *not* been undergone) but that we should reflect in earnest on the Occasion and Necessity our Sins had made of such a Sacrifice, and learn to abhor ourselves in Dust and Ashes. Our Saviour says to every one, what heretofore he said to some good tender Women, *Weep not for me, but for yourselves*. One cannot be insensible at the Recital and Remembrance of his personal Sufferings: But all those Sorrows are produced by the meer Mechanism of Nature, and if they go no farther, are theatrical and useless, tho' very apt to impose upon ourselves; since 'tis, we find, the easier Task by much, to dissolve into Sighs and Tears, and Lamentations for having gratified our sinful Desires, than to subdue them, and deny them any farther Satisfaction. The Mourning we are called to, is a serious and composed Frame of Mind, with which we are to enter into Disquisition, how we have passed the Time of our sojourning here; what we were sent into this World to do, and how we have performed it; to call to Mind, what in the Heat and Hurry of our Business we have either forgotten or neglected to do, or what we have too inconsiderately done; what we have also done with Choice, and a deliberate Malice, with Boldness and Presumption, against the sober Dictates of our Reason, against the soft and gentle Admonitions, or the most loud and terrible Rebukes of Conscience: and to consider withal, the fearful and amazing Hazards we have hereby exposed ourselves to, the Wrath of God, and what is consequent thereon: and those amazing Methods he hath also taken to cover us from that Wrath, and free us from those dreadful Consequences; the sending Christ into the World, to live for our Example and Instruction, and to die a painful Death for our Redemption; to offer up, upon the Cross, an all-sufficient Sacrifice, to reconcile us to the Father, to make Atonement and obtain Forgiveness, for all the Sins we shall repent us truly of, and leave; and, when this World is at an end, to raise our Bodies from the Dust, as heretofore he did his own, and reunite them to their Souls, never to be again divided, but live in everlasting Happiness in Heaven. These are the Subjects, that the Wisdom of the Church advises us to fix our Thoughts upon, at this particular Season, in order to the making the Heart wiser and better. And that we might attend more freely to these Matters, she advises *Abstinence*, and a prudent Retrenchment of all those Superfluities, that minister to Luxury more than Necessity; by which the busy Spirits are composed and quieted; the loose and scattered Thoughts are recollected and brought home, and such a serious sober Frame of Mind put on, that we can think with less Distraction, remember more exactly, pray with more Fervency, repent more earnestly, and resolve with more Deliberation on Amendment. These are the beneficial Fruits and Effects of a reasonable well-governed Abstinence, as every one may find by their Experience.

Not that the Church, or any wise Man, thinks, that there is any Virtue, or great matter, in any one's being thoughtful, sober, and abstemious, for five or six Weeks, and then returning to their usual Liberties and loose Practice; but that  
both



both of them are willing to believe and hope, that Men will take that Time to be-think themselves in earnest, and call their Ways to Remembrance, and, in it, form such Resolutions of repenting of what is past, and of amending for the Time to come, as will certainly hold, and take Effect for ever after. This is the Intent and Purpose of all such sort of Prescriptions and Injunctions: and when they have taken place effectually, there is an end of them; their primary Obligation ceases with their Necessity. But till that Work be done, it were adviseable for all, to take those Courses, that their Reason and their Experience tell them are most proper and most likely to effect it. And therefore where the Heart wants to be made wiser and better, the House of Mourning, which may well become the House of Wisdom, should not be neglected. And 'tis no small Encouragement to think, that no one ever yet repented, either of entering, or continuing in, this House; nor of the manner how he passed his Time, nor of the Resolutions he made in it; nor of the Fruits of Righteousness which they produced.

But, to give *these Sayings* all the Force I can, I will make an End, with observing, That whether they admonish or rebuke, whether they invite or threaten, they are the Result of the greatest Wisdom that ever a meer Man was endued with; and founded upon the fullest Experience that a rich and powerful Prince (who made his Riches and his Power subservient to his Pleasures) could possibly have, and therefore well deserve to be considered. And altho' with all his Wisdom, he did not, because he would not, preserve himself unspotted from the World, but poorly fell into the Snares of both living and dead Idols, and became thereby a very bad Example to the World; yet has he made us some amends, (if we will hear him) by his turning *Preacher*: for his last and best Judgment, was his Retraction and Repentance, of which this Book has evermore been thought an ample Evidence and Proof. And no body can make any better use of it, nor hardly any other, than to believe what he says in it, to trust to his Experience, and to be wise at his Expence; who, after many vain Enquiries, and worse Experiments, to find wherein a Man's true Happiness consisted, found, with the Loss of all his Time, his Innocence, and Virtue, that it consisted not in any thing he had tried (all which he says was *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*) and therefore counsels all who would be truly wise, and truly happy, to begin where he himself but ended, with *fearing God, and keeping his Commandments*.



A  
L E T T E R  
F R O M

Mr. J. B U R D E T T,

Who was Executed on *Friday, February 1.* for the Murder of Captain FALKNER, to some Attorneys Clerks of his Acquaintance.  
Written six Days before his Execution.

**A**S wicked as I have all my Life been, and as hardened as I now am, yet can I not endure to think that one in *Hell* should shew more Pity to his Brethren, and desire that *Lazarus* from the Dead should be sent to warn them, lest they also came into that Place of Torment, than I, who am alive, should shew to you my old Companions in my Wickedness; that you by your Repentance should avoid that Place, into which (without God's infinite Mercies) I am about to enter.

There will not be many Days, betwixt my being what I am, and being *Dead*; give me therefore the same Belief and Credit now, that you would give me ten Days hence, should God permit me to appear to you, and tell you in what a State I am. Do not, I intreat you, mock at my Advice, and tell me I am turned a *Preacher*, in my last Hours: I am so; but I tell you truly, I can preach no Comfort to myself, but yet would fain preach some Security to you. My Education, as you know, was good, and I was bred to read the Holy Scriptures carefully; but now, believe me, I remember nothing of them but what makes against me: All that occurs, is Terror, Wrath, and Condemnation. That Holy Book lies open still before me, but there are Scales upon my Eyes, Hardness upon my Heart, and a Stupidity on all my Faculties and Senses; so that I neither read nor think, but am amazed and lost in my Confusion.

My Mother and a Sister sit or kneel continually before me, the very Pictures of Sorrow in Despair: They every Moment lift up their Eyes, their Hands and Hearts to God, that he would touch me with a Sense of my Condition, and give me a true Concern for it; and when their Tears will let them speak, they call upon me very faltringly---*to pray*---that is all they can bring out. Nor can I answer them a Word for Tears: My Heart is overwhelmed, and I can only look them and myself into new Transports of unutterable Grief. *But yet I cannot pray.* The very Keeper turned away his Head the other Day, for Sadness, to see how we were together; which wounded me so deep, that had I had an Instrument of Death by me, I could not surely have outlived that Moment; to think I had occasioned them such Shame and Sorrow now, and had entailed it on them for their whole Life! O God! the Pangs which that one Consideration gave, and still gives me, are such as cannot be conceived by any Heart that is not in the same Condition with my own. This is the Recompence such Sons as I make to their Parents and their near Relations! But what is this to you? It is indeed as nothing, if you have neither Parents nor Relations in the World: But if you have, believe me when I tell you, that the Concern I have for them, and the Concern they shew for me, give me a thousand times more Grief and Pain of Heart than all the Apprehensions I have of Shame and bodily Pain, that may attend me at the Place of Execution. This is one Warning I would have you take; and could you  
apprehend



apprehend this Torment feelingly but half an Hour, I know not but it might preserve you from feeling it for ever after. But hear the rest----I who am, upon all Occasions else, as soft and melting as a Child, yet am not moved at all, either by their Intreaties or Example, to join with them in Prayer, altho' it be for the Salvation of my Soul. No, not a Thought of mine can tend that way: My Heart is quite insensible and dead to all such Purposes. I wondred at it, that I could not so much as say *Amen* to a Prayer that my poor Mother prayed, and which I thought was the most affectionate, most pertinent, and proper to my Case, that could be framed; so proper, that it seemed to fit no body's Case besides: and yet I could not bring myself to say *Amen* to it. Judicial Hardness certainly! That a Man cannot pray for the greatest Good that can befall him, nor pray to be delivered from the greatest Evil!

Not that I do not remember how great a Sinner I have been, or yet how great my Punishment will be; (for those two Considerations are continually before me) but that I reason, when I think at all, in this Manner: If a more than ordinary Portion of God's Grace be absolutely necessary to the rescuing and restoring one of the greatest Sinners in the World, to a State of Repentance, and that such a one may by his Sins justly provoke the Almighty to with-hold that Grace, what shall he do, or how shall he repent? I know I am that Sinner; and by the Hardness of my Heart, I find I have not that Assistance. How can I stir? I feel I do not stir at all. Distressed Condition! But yet I must acquit my great Creator of all Injustice in this Proceeding. 'Tis what I knew before might come, as well as I find it now. 'Tis what I brought upon myself: 'Tis the Proceeding of the wisest and the tenderest Fathers we have with their Sons, when so enormously ungracious, wicked, and unreclaimable, by all the Methods they could take. They cast them off; they leave them to themselves. So am I left---and tho' I say it with my Lips, *God help me*, yet in my Heart I cannot so much as hope *he will*, my Sins are so provoking.

They tell me, that our Saviour's Sufferings were so meritorious, that they made sufficient Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, tho' never so many and great. I have no manner of Distrust of that; I always thought, considering who he was, that his least Sufferings were, and must have been of infinite Price and Merit. But what are they to me, or any one besides, unless applied by Faith and true Repentance? The Pardon is indeed proclaimed, but I have never had the Heart to sue it out in Form; so that I stand thereby but the more obstinate Offender. The universal Ransom is indeed laid down, but none can be a Sharer of it, but upon such Conditions as I have never yet thought of fulfilling. I never could believe that God was wanting to a Man, but that a Man was always wanting to himself, and to the Assistances that God afforded him, with which he might and ought to have cooperated. And surely 'tis the Abuse of Grace, the constant Neglect of these Assistances, and the continually repeated Despise done to the good Spirit (that will not always strive with Man) that does, even in our own Opinion, justify God's withdrawing and with-holding them from us; and then we perish irrecoverably. I cannot but condemn myself, let me do what I will. 'Tis I that have shut my Eyes, and brought this Hardness upon my Heart, so that I neither see, nor hear, nor understand, how to be healed.

They press me also with the Examples of many great notorious Sinners, both in and out of Scriptures, who ran a longer Course of Wickedness, and much more mischievous, they say, than mine; who yet at length were turned to God by true Repentance, and were saved. I doubt it not at all: His Mercy has no Bounds; his Goodness may be as extensive as his Power: Forgiveness always follows timely and sincere Repentance; but he must give Repentance where he finds it not, or else Forgiveness will not follow, if we will take his word for it; and he who does not find his Heart stirred to Repentance, reaps little Comfort from whatever can be said of its most blessed Fruit, Forgiveness. I do not think it is impossible for God to touch  
my



my Heart, even yet, and bring me to Repentance: I only know I have out-finned all *reasonable* Expectation of it. And till I feel some Tokens of that blessed Disposition in me, the Fountain of Hope seems to be quite dried up to me. When I consider in what manner I have led my Life, for the seven or eight Years last past of it; and recollect how almost every Day and every Night thereof has been filled up with strange Impieties and Profanations of one kind or other, with execrable Oaths, unheard of Blasphemies and Curses, with almost a perpetual Drunkenness, with Whoredoms and Adulteries never to be numbred up, and Villanies of every kind that can be thought upon, and more than can be thought upon by Men who have a Spark of Honesty, of Virtue, or Religion left-----When I remember this has been my Life, and these my constant Habits, how can I think that God should change me in an Instant? If peradventure I could point out but one single Day, of all those Years wherein I had not called on God, lightly or earnestly, in Folly or in Rage, to DAMN ME, and that good single Day would make Atonement for the rest; I verily believe that single Day could not be found in all that Number. What reason has such a Man as this to hope for a miraculous unusual Share of Grace, only because without it he is lost? No; such a Life as this has found the End it righteously deserved: It ended in the killing of a Man; a Stranger, inoffensive, unprovoking. I ran him through the Heart, thoughtless of Death, impenitent, and unprepared. I gave him not a Moment's time, to recommend himself to God's Mercies; but sent him, with his Sins all fresh about him, to give his last Accounts to his great Judge. And would not this alone deserve to weigh down any Man to Hell, without the adding to it, what a valuable and useful Life I robbed the Publick of, and how much Sorrow, Loss, and Misery, I heaped upon his Family and Friends? Behold in me the Justice of God's Judgments, in bringing me to a violent and shameful Death, and leaving me to reap the bitter Consequence of an impenitent and harden'd Heart!

I rose betimes this Morning, to write this Letter to you, whilst the Contents of it were strong upon my Mind. It is the Fruit of all my Night's Study. I drank (according to the ways of this accursed Place) exceedingly hard, that I might sleep, and think of nothing; but Sleep departed from my Eyes, I was most staringly awake, and sober to Amazement, and I could think of nothing else but what I have set down; and never thought so seriously and long together, I doubt, in all my Life: And since I came into this House of Horror, I have not had so easy a Thought as I now have, upon the reading over what I have written to you. The bottom of that can only be, the Hope I have, that what I have written may have some Weight with you; and that in the Description of my sad Estate, you may read a great deal of your own; and by your Care and timely departing from those evil Ways that brought me hither, may come to live and die happily.

I never gave you good Advice before, nor ever received any such from you: We have hitherto only encouraged one another in all sorts of Wickedness, and helped to make each other as odious to God above, and as mischievous to Man here, as we could. The Work is finished upon me; but you have Time before you, and may, if you will, prevent your final Ruin. You can do me no Service in the World, I can do you the greatest, if you will let me be your Counsellor, and follow my Advice. Let it be so, and let me have the advantage over you in this, that I first moved you to Repentance and Amendment; and you, if moved, may have the advantage over me for ever. My Time is so appointed and so near, that I can count the very Hours I have to live; and 'tis that Consideration kills me quite, when I but think of forming a Resolution of repenting: For what Conviction could I have myself, or what Proof could I give the World, that such a Resolution was sincere, when I knew beforehand I could have but eight or ten poor Days, to bring forth Fruits meet for it, and all that while under the Expectation of the Sword of Justice falling on my Head? The matter



ter is not so with you; you are not so condemned; your Life is still uncertain, and your Death removed as far as it pleases God. Do *you* but form good Resolutions of Repentance and Amendment presently, and your Uncertainty of Life and Death will be a good Testimony to your Conscience, that such Resolutions were sincere, because you made them, and resolved to keep them, whilst you lived, whether you lived a great while, or a little.

This makes, I think, a great and very happy Difference betwixt the Resolutions of Repentance which are made by one in Health and at his Liberty, and those which another makes under the Sentence of Condemnation; altho' the former should happen to die within as small a Time as there usually passes betwixt the Condemnation and the Execution of a Criminal; and should not have the Satisfaction of knowing by *Experience* and *long Proof*, that his Repentance was sincere, no more than the condemned Penitent could have. So much there is in Resolutions that are free and unconstrained, that if the World were mine, I could, methinks, exchange it readily, to be in that Condition.

And this is the Reason why I believe you have not yet out-stood all Opportunities of being saved, as I have done; because you are yet at liberty, and free to chuse, whether you will continue in your wicked Ways, or will betake yourselves to better; and because you have, for ought you know, the Opportunities of proving by Experience and the Course of your future Life, the Truth and the Sincerity of your Resolutions to live in the Fear of God, and in Obedience to the Precepts of the Gospel; which I, and such as I, can never have; who have the Period of my Life determined to an Hour, and all the Interim have that Hour continually before my Eyes.

Here I am interrupted by a good Man, who comes to bring me spiritual Comfort, if I can receive it: You shall be sure to hear from me again, and know the Issue of our Conference, if it be good for you, and I have leisure to give it. If not, make much of this, and read it seriously, and twice; and ask yourselves, not one another, what you think of it? And mind the Answer that your Heart gives, and follow the Resolutions that you then incline to make, and think reasonable. I am, but in a truer Sense than I have ever been before,

*Your Affectionate Friend,*

J. B.



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L E T T E R  
T O A N

Inhabitant of the Parish of St. *Andrew's Holbourn*, about new  
CEREMONIES in the CHURCH.

S I R,

U P O N your being with me the other Night, and telling me that the Curate of your Parish had told the People, in some of his Discourses from the Pulpit, that they must needs STAND UP at the reading of the *Second Lesson* when taken out of the *Gospels*, and also at the *Singing of the Psalms*, with other *Odneffes*, and desiring me to give you my Opinion of these Matters; I set myself, when you were gone, to consider them very seriously: And I have done it in such a Manner and Method, as will not only shew you my Opinion, and the Grounds of it, but may be useful to other Purposes.

I confess that neither the Man, nor the Gesture itself, considered singly, is worth the taking any Pains about. But *the Spirit of Imposing* is both troublesome and mischievous, and ought to be carefully watched against by all Men. Even *Governors* themselves must always have Regard, in all their Orders and Injunctions, to what is *useful, edifying*, and in some Degree *necessary*: And they who are the wisest and the best will ever take the greatest Care they can, to make their Laws and Rules such as shall be the most easily complied withal by plain and honest People, as they will certainly find the most Content in such Obedience. But that *private Men*, without Authority, should impose their particular Fancies upon their Equals, is so far from being to be *justified*, that it ought not to be *endured*.

1. Of all the *Episcopal Churches* in the World, antient and modern, of whose *Liturgies* we have any certain Knowledge, the *Church of England*, by Law established, retains and uses the *fewest* Rites and Ceremonies in her Forms of publick Worship.

2. She might have used and retained *more*, had she thought fit: For she owns in her 34<sup>th</sup> Article, that *every Particular, or National Church, may ordain, change, and abolish Ceremonies or Rites, ordained only by Man's Authority, so that all things be done to edifying*.

3. But of this *edifying* she does not allow or make any *Bishop, Parson or Curate*, to be the Judge, but has tied them down to certain *Rules*, which are (without some plain and urgent Reason to the contrary) to be observed by all in general who *officiate*.

4. These *Rules* are all contained in the *Rubrics* of the Common-Prayer, which are also now confirmed by the Laws of the Land.

5. Whosoever observes the *Rules* prescribed in the *Rubric*, in reading the publick Offices, does as much as he is required to do, either by the *Church*, or by the *Law*: Whosoever does *less* is an *Offender*; whosoever does *more* is an *Innovator*, and does it without Authority, and is fitter to be *punished* than *followed*, and breaks the Unity of the Church in point of Ceremony, preferring his own Opinion to the Judgment of the Church.

6. If the *Laity* conform to the Rites and Ceremonies prescribed in the *Rubrics*, they also do as much as is required of them.

7. All



7. All the Ceremonies required of the Laity, are *kneeling* at their Prayers, and *standing up* at the *Creed*, or Confession of their Faith: They who do this, do all that the Church requires.

8. No Clergyman has Authority to tell the People they must do *more* than the Church requires, which speaks by her *Rubrics*.

9. Altho' the Church allows, in *Fact and Practice*, more Ceremonies than are required by the *Rubric*; yet is the *Rubric* still the *Rule and Law*, both to the *Governors* and the *Governed*. The *first* can neither command nor appoint *more*; the *latter* are obliged to no more than the *Rubric* enjoins.

10. Whosoever therefore tells the People, that it is their *Duty* to *stand up* or to *kneel*, where the Church requires it not, tells them in effect, that he is *wiser* than the Church, and knows what is better for them, than their *Governors* did, or do, who have, it seems, omitted and neglected to tell the People their *Duty*.

11. The Ceremonies allowed in *Practice* by the Church, tho' not enjoined by the *Rubric*, were such as were in use in the Church, *before* and *when* the *Rubrics* were made; and being found reasonable, and easy, and becoming, were not enforced by any new *Law*, but left in possession of what Force they had obtained by *Custom*. And even there, he who complies not with these Ceremonies, offends against no *Law*, but only against *Custom*, which yet a prudent Man will not lightly do, when once it has obtained in general.

12. This however ought not to encourage (much less will it authorize) any private Person, to introduce any *new Ceremony* into the publick Worship, upon pretence that the *new* is as much enjoined as the *old* was, and that there is as good Reason for the *one*, as for the *other*. For though no Custom that is younger than a *Law*, ought to prevail *against* that *Law*, yet where there is no *Law*, Custom supported by a general Practice of wise and good Men, and not opposed by their Superiors, becomes a *sort of Rule*, and will not easily be transgressed by such as love Decency and Order. And therefore a *new Ceremony* does not stand upon the same Foot with an *old* one, because it has not been generally well received, nor been confirmed by Custom and Usage, though perhaps there may be as good Reason for the new as for the old.

13. It was the Custom at the beginning of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign, for the People to *stand up* at the *Gloria Patri*, and when the *Te Deum*, *Jubilate*, and the other *Hymns* were repeated; and the Custom to *stand up* when the *Gospels* after the *Epistles* were read on *Sundays* and *Holidays*, and the Custom for the People to say, *Glory be to thee, O Lord*. The Church was in Possession, as it were, of these things, and made no *Rule* concerning them, but left them to be continued or disused, as it should happen, and so they continue to this Day.

14. But it was not then the Custom, nor has been since, for the People to *stand up* whilst the *Psalms* were singing in Parish Churches; nor whilst the *Second Lesson* was reading, tho' it were out of one of the *Gospels*, either on *Sundays*, *Holidays* or *Week-days*; and yet if we should go to examine the *Reason* of Things, 'tis very likely the *singing Psalms* would be found to be of greater Authority than the *Te Deum* itself, altho' it be the finest *Hymn* that was ever made by Man; and 'tis more than likely that the *Second Lesson* is as much *Gospel*, when read in the *first Service*, as when 'tis read in the *second Service* after the *Epistle*. And I hope it will never come to be disputed, whether the *Epistle* is not as much the *Word of God*, and the *Dictate of the Holy Ghost*, as is the *Gospel* which follows it. And certainly the *Lord's Prayer*, when read in the *Second Lesson* (as it is six times in the Year) is as much the *Lord's Prayer*, as when it is repeated both by the Minister and People in the *Daily Service*, when both are obliged by the *Rubric* to do it *on their Knees*, which yet they are not obliged to do, when they hear it read as part of the *Second Lesson*: Which by the way, may help to correct that Disturbance, which is occasioned by ignorant People's getting



getting up from their Seats and standing on their Feet, when that Heavenly Prayer comes to be read in a *Second Lesson*, which is neither enjoined by Authority, nor received by general Custom, and must therefore go for a *private Fancy*, which ought to find no Place in publick Assemblies.

15. A *Parity of Reason* is not therefore sufficient to introduce new Ceremonies upon, without *Authority, Rule, or Custom*. People are much at their Liberty, in their *Family or Closet Devotions*, but must not innovate in *Congregations*. The Clergy ought not to lead the People into new Ways, nor should the People follow them, upon pretence of better Edification.

16. The first *General Council* that was ever held in the Christian World, and the most esteemed, was that of *Nice*; and that decreed in the xxth Canon, that all Christians, every where, should say their Prayers *standing on their Feet* (and not *kneeling*) every *Sunday* in the Year, and every *working Day* besides, betwixt *Easter-Day* and *Whitsunday*.

17. The Council assigns no *Reason* for this, (as they need not) but they who lived then and a little after, tell us it was, that the Christians were thereby to shew, that they were *risen with Christ*. Now certainly this Reason, considered in itself, will hold altogether as good, for *standing up* at Prayers, *every Day in the Year*, as on any *Week-day* betwixt *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*. But certainly, that Curate would have been held for an audacious perverse Creature, who should have exhorted his People, to *stand up* at their Prayers all the Days in the *Lent Season*, because there was as much reason to do so before *Easter-Day*, as after it; and because the Council had not forbid the doing so, and because that *standing up* is a Posture of Respect and of Attention. Private Men have nothing to do, to assign Reasons for introducing Ceremonies, of which there is no need, and for doing which they have no Authority.

18. But what if, after all, these Innovations of *standing up* at the reading the *Second Lessons* and at the *singing Psalms*, be not sincerely intended for greater Decency's sake, and shewing more Reverence, and exciting greater Devotion, but meerly to start up a *new Distinction*, and make a farther Difference betwixt those who come to the publick Worship in the same Place, and at the same time, with one another, but who are of different Parties, with respect to the King and State Affairs? You know in what *Parish* you are, and what sort of People they are who chiefly promote these Innovations, and are most forward to distinguish themselves by little ceremonious Observances; and you also know what *King* it is they incline to.

19. The *Low-Church* People, as they are called, are content, when they come to Church, to comply with the Rules enjoined by their lawful Governors, and to *stand*, or *kneel*, or *sit*, as they are bid to do by Rule and Custom; but 'tis very likely that they will scruple to join in any *new Ceremony*, without Command of Authority, as well because they care not to be imposed upon by any *private Fancy*, as because these *Innovators* are by no means acceptable to them.

They will therefore do as they used to do, and so they will be marked and known for *Low-Church* People, which will have such Consequences at Church, as other Marks of Distinction have in other Places; the Mischief of which has been enough, one would think, already, and needs no Augmentation.

My Advice is therefore, that you do not leave the Parish-Church, because of these *new-fangled Whimsies*; but resort thither, as timely and as constantly as you have hitherto done; and behave yourself as well, as seriously and devoutly as you used to do; and have no manner of regard to what you see others do, as to the ceremonial Part, if it be not appointed by the Rubric, or approved by Custom, which you have hitherto been guided by in the publick Worship. And that you may the better see how little Countenance or Encouragement is to be given, even by private People, to any *Innovations*



tions in the Church: I will shew you in a few Words, the Rise and Origin of one or two of the most corrupt Practices of the Church of *Rome*.

Some hundreds of Years had pass'd, before any *Picture*, *Image* or *Statue* of a Saint was placed in any Christian Church, throughout the World; tho' it is not unlikely that there were both in other Places for Ornament and Honour. It came at length into a *Painter's* Head, to represent, in as lively a manner as he could, the Sufferings of a *martyr'd Saint*, to which the Church was dedicated, *i. e.* by whose Name it was called; and to hang this Piece in some conspicuous Place within it. Wise Men were offended with the Novelty; not at the *Picture*, but at the setting it up in the *Church*; but the common People were mightily pleas'd with it, and said that *Pictures* were the only Books which they could read; and found themselves much edified by seeing how the Saints had glorified God, and confirmed the Faith by their Constancy in suffering and enduring Torments for the sake of Christ: And could such good Thoughts, and noble Resolutions, be better rais'd in them than at *Church*, where they met so often to worship God? And therefore such good *Pictures* were most properly placed in Churches. There lived hard by a very devout *Statuary*, who excelled in carving *Images*, both of Stone and Wood, who seeing the People so mightily taken with the *Picture*, asked them one Day, whether an *Image* of their Patron-Saint, carved out of fine Marble, and placed in a convenient Niche within the Church, would not excite the same good Thoughts, and good Remembrances in their Minds, that the *Picture* did, the Colours of which would, in time, fade much, and wear away; and hearing nothing to the contrary, he set it up, and was commended for his Zeal and Benefaction by them: And great gazing there was at it; none of them making any exception to an *Image*, which they could not make to a *Picture*; both seem'd alike innocent, alike useful, and alike proper to excite good Thoughts, and devout Affections in the Minds of such as looked on them.

It was not long after, that a Man of Quality and great Wealth ordered the *Statuary* to make the finest Image he could of *Christ* our Lord, and fix it on a *Cross*, with all the Marks of Sorrow, and most painful Agonies that could be possibly express'd in such a Work, and place it in the *Eastern Light*, towards which he saw the People generally turn in their Acts of Worship. This was accordingly done, and the People were very fond of this *new Help to their Devotion*. Here was the *King of Saints* himself, they said; here they were hourly put in mind of their Sins, which cost their Saviour all the bitter Pains he underwent upon the *Cross*, for their Redemption, which were so lively express'd in this good Image, that they could never view it well, without Compunction of Heart within, and knocking of their Breasts without, and other Tokens of Repentance. The Gentleman's Wife, and eldest Son, besought him, out of pure Devotion, that our Lord might not be worse attended in the *Church*, than he was upon *Mount Calvary*; and hereupon there was another Image made to represent his most afflicted *Mother*, and placed on his right Side; and another on his left, namely, his most beloved Disciple *John*, for so it was found to be in the Gospel; and thus the Church was furnished with Books for the Laity to read and meditate upon; and it was not long before they bowed their Heads, incens'd them, and kneeled and said their Prayers before them. Under the Statue of the Patron-Saint, was his Tomb of Black Marble, in which the precious Reliques of this holy Martyr were deposited *i. e.* the Bones that were not burnt to Ashes, together with some Ashes of his Body that had been consumed by Fire. At this Tomb the People chose to say their Prayers, rather than in any other Part of the Church, because they had heard that the Saint himself had kneeled in the Place where his Tomb stood, when he offer'd up his Life to God. This Tomb the People prayed at constantly for whatever they wanted at God's Hands. One prayed for a sick Child, another for a dying Husband, and another for the Cure of a Disease under which she had long laboured: And it so



pleased God that their Prayers were heard and granted in their several Kinds; and then it came into their Heads, that their Prayers were the *rather* heard for their being put up at the Tomb of this good Saint; and that more People had been heard in what they asked at this Tomb, than in any other Place or Part of the Church: And when they reasoned among themselves how, or why this should be; they were told, that God might intend thereby to glorify his Saints, and to shew how precious their Death was in his Sight: And there were some, who doubted not to affirm, that the Saint himself did certainly intercede with God, in their behalf: For who (said they) can think that the Saints in Heaven should sit and do nothing? And can they do any thing better and more befitting them, than pray for those who live on Earth, and want all manner of Comfort and Assistance? And can any Prayers be more acceptable to God, than such as the Church Triumphant puts up for their Fellow-members of the Church Militant? And can any Prayers be sooner heard, than what his favourite Saints, who died for the Truth, put up? And when it was made so clear, by these Deductions, that the Saints did undoubtedly intercede with God, for their Fellow-Christians on the Earth, it was very easy for the People then to ask of God, that he would grant them their Requests, *at* and *for* the Intercession, more especially of these Saints, his faithful Servants, whose Merits might prevail for what their own Unworthiness had made them neither dare to ask, nor fit to receive. And when these People had, at any time, received at God's Hands what they had asked through the Intercession of the Saints, it was very natural, for ignorant unthinking Heads, to conclude, that God had truly granted what they had asked, for the sake of that Saint's Intercession; which yet is no Consequence at all, since God might grant it for his own Mercy's sake, and through the Intercession of his ever-blessed Son; but this the People did not mind, the Saints Intercession was the Means they used last; and having found, as they thought, the Effects of it, they looked no farther. But things did not long stand here; the People were not content to pray to God, to grant them what they wanted, for the Merits sake, and at the Intercession of the Saints, but they prayed to those very Saints themselves, that they would intercede with God to grant them what they wanted. This was a wide Step indeed, and a great Change. The Passage from the one Practice to the other, was not easy, natural, or consequential; but Superstition got over it quickly, and fancied there was but a little difference, betwixt People's praying to God to hear the Saints praying for them, and the praying to the Saints that they would pray to God for them; whereas there is the widest difference in the World betwixt those two Prayers; the one is directed to *God*, the sole proper Object, omnipresent and omnipotent; the other to *Creatures* only present in one Place, and of themselves able to do nothing. But these were Scruples that never troubled those good People, they had a Faith that swallowed every thing, and seemed not to value Consequences at all. To the Tomb they came, and prayed the Saint to pray to God for whatever good things they wanted; and when this Practice came to be contested a little, it was justified, as done out of *pure Humility*, because they were unworthy to approach to God by Prayer themselves in Person, and therefore did it by the Mediation of Saints their Intercessors. Well, in some reasonable time, instead of praying the Saint to pray to God to give them this or that, they came to praying the Saint directly and downright to bestow this or that Blessing on them *himself*: They thought it was too much round about, to say, *O Apollonia, pray to God to cure me of the Tooth-ach*; and they said directly, *O Apollonia, cure me, I beseech thee, of the Tooth-ach*. But being hard put to it to defend this Practice, they said they meant no more but to intreat her to pray to God for them; and all the good Writers of that corrupt Church, who have any Sense or Virtue left, desire to have all the Prayers that are put up to the Saints, to be understood



understood to mean no more than a bare *Ora pro nobis*, or,---*Pray for us*; which is, indeed, impossible to be done, by People that can read and understand. But my Design was not to dispute about any thing, but to shew how one Practice draws on another, not near so innocent as the first, till at length they come to things ridiculous, absurd, and never to be justified: And therefore that a *Stand* is to be made *at first* against all manner of *Innovations* in the Publick Worship, that are not authorized by the Governors of the Church, who have the Power of ordering our Behaviour there, let them be never so *reasonable*, so *decent*, or *convenient*. The *Curate* of the Parish is no more to judge what is reasonable, decent, or convenient, in the Publick Worship, than the *Clerk*, or any Lay-man of the Parish is; and there is not a Lay-man in the Parish who has not as much Right to *oppose*, as the Curate has to *impose* any new Rite, Ceremony, or Posture in the Publick Worship: And whenever he shews you *his* Commission so to do, I'll undertake to shew him *yours*, to withstand him. But you are afraid of being *singular*. Where is the Singularity of doing as you always used to do, and as the rest of the Congregation used to do, before these *new Lights* came amongst you? Why is your Parish *singular* in doing what the rest of the Parishes both in the City and Suburbs *do not*? But what is the Harm of standing up? None at all. And what is the Harm of sitting as you used to do? Why did the Curate make the People change that Posture? There is indeed no Harm in either Posture, nor any great Good; but there is Harm in yielding to the *imposing Spirit* of any private Man, in the publick Worship. And whosoever reads with any Observation, will find it was, at first, the single Opinion or single Practice of some private Man, (and perhaps a very good Man too) that laid the Foundation of all the superstitious Practices that prevail amongst the corrupt Part of Christians, now in the World. They were at first *innocent* enough, and for a while they continued *tolerable*; but by degrees, and adding one thing to another, they came at last to the pass we now see them in; and who can tell at what time the Impositions of private Fancies are to be withstood, if not at first? And can any one tell where they will stop, if private Men may not withstand them? Who can tell us, why this Curate should not, in time, exhort the Gentlemen of *Holbourn*, to do as the Gentlemen of *Poland* do, *i. e.* draw out their Swords when they repeat the *Creed*, to shew how ready they are to defend the Faith of Christ against all Opposers? This is a very significant Ceremony, and makes a fine Show; and I will undertake that he has as much *Reason*, and as much *Authority*, to exhort them to the one, as he has to tell them they must stand up when the Psalms are singing; since it is neither the Custom of other Churches so to do, nor yet enjoined by competent Authority.

Since you know me well, I need not tell you, that I have very little Concern either *for this* Posture, or *against* the other. I use them both as it happens, either for my Ease or Convenience; and I lay no Strefs on either. But I am very zealous against the Pride of *Singularity*, *private Fancies*, and *Innovations* in Matters relating to the Publick Worship of God; and I would have you so too; and the more so, because there is a bold, daring, innovating Spirit, got of late among the young, unlearned, injudicious part of the Clergy, which if not timely repressed, and checked, will give disturbance both to the Church and State, and therefore I would have them receive no manner of Countenance or Encouragement, from any one's Submission, Imitation, or Example.

Let us obey *God*, without Reserve; the *King*, according to Law; and our *Ecclesiastical Governors*, as far as we can with a good Conscience do. But when a private Man shall bid us do, what neither *God*, nor the *King*, nor the *Bishop*, requires of us, it will be very civil, if we only tell him he is *impertinent*.



# The Justice of Paying D E B T S:

A

## S E R M O N

Preached in the

## C I T Y.

To the Worshipful and Worthy CITIZENS of LONDON.

**I**T is for your sakes especially, that to the foregoing Sermon I add this other, which I preached, some Years ago, when I was a Minister amongst you. The Failing of some eminent Citizens, about that Time, occasion'd me to take this Matter in hand, and to consider it as thoroughly as I could, within the Compass of a Sermon. And the Management of it was then judg'd so seasonable and proper, as well as just and true, that I was much urg'd to make it publick: But I did not, at that Time, think it convenient.

I do it now, of my own accord, upon no other Motive than the Hopes of doing some Service by it, to a People who are, generally speaking, an Example to the Trading Part of the whole Kingdom, and therefore ought to be a good one. The Relation I had, was but to one or two Parishes of the City; but my Good-Will, and my Good Wishes extend to every one; and what I have said, in this Discourse, is equally applicable to all, and may, if it please God, be equally useful. And truly, almost every Year is made so remarkable by Miscarriages in Points of Honesty and Justice, of Prudence and Frugality, that it is impossible for a Sermon of this kind to be long unseasonable, if ever. And, for the present Year, I doubt you have an Instance now before your Eyes, that will justify this, and any such Discourse; and make it appear as seasonable, as it could be in any Year within your Memory: An Instance, methinks, as much without Example, as I hope it will be without Followers.

I am very confident, that you will all agree, that I have assign'd the true Cause of most of these Miscarriages, and consequently of the Injustices and Mischiefs that accompany and follow them: Namely, The living above and beyond your true Abilities. And therefore you will not want to be told, that it is in all your Powers, in a great measure, to prevent them, by becoming (which is the true and proper Character of Citizens) a Sober, Frugal, Diligent, and Careful People; and, that this Advice may the better become me, I must also add, that without your being so, you will find it hard to be either Just, or Honest, or Religious.

I may want an Apology, for ought I know, with some People, for thinking that such a Discourse as this may do any Good amongst you. But I am one who have a better Opinion both of Myself and You, than not to make the Experiment. I have often ventured my Credit upon the like Hopes of doing some Service to such as I applied to, in this Way; and I am sure it has not been without some Success. And I do not at all distrust, that this (by the Grace of GOD) will have a good Effect upon many, who are truly concern'd in it, if they will read it seriously, and carefully consider it. And, in this Hope I leave it with you, and remain,

Your affectionate Friend, and faithful Servant,

W. E L Y.



2 KINGS, Chap. IV. Ver. 7.

*Then she came and told the man of God : and he said, Go sell the oil, and pay thy debts, and live thou and thy children upon the rest.*

WHEN *Elijah* the Prophet was removed from hence to Heaven, his Servant *Elisha*, who had always ministered to him (as *Joshua* did to *Moses*) succeeded him in that great Office, and became (as his Master had been) the Head of the Prophets. *The Schools of the Prophets* were, in those Days, the Seminaries of Learning and Religion, where such as were disposed, were bred up in common, in the Knowledge and Service of the true God, as it now stood in Opposition to the Worship of the *Calves* set up by *Jeroboam*, under the Care and Instruction of wise and religious Masters, who sent them out as they saw Occasion, to convert such as had revolted, or to confirm such as had persisted in the way of Truth, and to deliver such Revelations of God's Will, as he was at any time pleased to make to them. Here they lived with great Frugality and Simplicity, and were under no Obligation to live *single*, but governed themselves in that Matter as they saw fit; for tho' the *Sons of the Prophets* only signifies *the Prophets* (as it is in other Languages) yet it came to signify so, by the Prophets usually breeding up their Sons, in the same Manner they had themselves been bred, and preparing them by a virtuous and religious Education, to receive such Impressions as God might at any time be pleased to make upon them, and to qualify them for the Prophetick Office, either in the ordinary or extraordinary Sense of those Words. This is the original Reason of *the Sons of the Prophets* coming to signify barely *Prophets*. And therefore they were all at liberty to marry, or live *single*, as they found it best for them to do. *Elijah* and *Elisha* were both unmarried; but others, it is plain, were married and had Children. Of this School of the Prophets, *Elisha* was now the Head and Governor. And to him there came a certain Woman, with a sad Story, that her Husband, who was *one of the Sons of the Prophets*, and *one that did fear the Lord*, (*i. e.* who was a Worshipper of the true God, and not of *Baal*, and in the true old way appointed by God, and not of the *Calves* set up in Schism, and for Convenience sake) was lately dead, and had left her, with her Children, very destitute, and (which was still worse) charged with a Debt which she knew not how to pay: That her Creditor bore exceeding hard upon her, and finding her worth little or nothing, in Substance, was coming to demand her two Sons, (as he might by Law, or Custom, do) to be his Bondsmen, or Servants, *i. e.* at least, to keep them in his Service till they had wrought out the Father's Debt, and satisfied his Claim. So that she had not only lost her Husband, which made her miserable enough, but should now be bereaved of her Children, which were not only the Comfort, but perhaps the Support and Sustenance of her Life, and lose them, moreover, to a very hard Bondage; for the Creditor, who would take that rigid Advantage that the Law gave him, was not like to deal very mercifully with them; which, to a Widow-Mother, must needs be a Consideration of great Pain and Sorrow. To this afflicted Woman, the Prophet (moved of God) replied, *What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house?* What is there you can raise towards the Discharge of your Husband's Debt?

There is no greater Act of Kindness can be done, than to assist the Widow and the Fatherless, with Counsel and Advice in their Distress; to put them in the way of making up their broken Fortunes, and extricating themselves out of their Difficulties, which the Loss of their Relations bring upon them, and out of which their Unskillfulness can find no Way, or their Concern and Sorrows will not let them see it. In



such Distress, a little good Advice and Help is worth a valuable Sum; and he is a good Man that gives it; *the Blessing of the Widow and the Fatherless will come upon him*, and that will carry still a greater with it, even that of God in his holy Habitation. To this Question of the Prophet, *What hast thou in the house?* the Woman answered presently, *that she had nothing in the World, but a Pot of Oil*: upon which he bids her to borrow as many empty Vessels as she could in all the Neighbourhood, and when she had done that, to shut her Door upon herself and Sons, that she might not be disturbed by Company, (whose Curiosity might probably bring them to see what she could do with all those empty Vessels she had borrowed) and then should fill them all from her own Pot, which should not fail to run as long as there was any thing left to hold it. The Woman was a Woman of Religion, and of a strong Faith; and knowing the Power of God to be without Bounds and Measure, and that the Spirit of *Elijah* rested on *Elisha*, obeyed him without Scruple, and went and did in every thing as he had bid, and found that every thing was answerable to what she had expected: And when she found her Treasure at an end, she came again to the Prophet, and told him all that had befallen her, expecting what Directions he would farther be pleased to give her: Upon which he says, in the Words of the Text, *Go, sell the Oil, and (with the Money) pay thy Debt, and live thou and thy Children upon the rest*.

Oil was a thing of great use both in the Service of God and Man, and 'tis said, v. 38. *that there was a dearth in the land*, great Scarcity of Provisions; and that perhaps would enhance the Price of this poor Woman's new Possession; and since she was to pay her Debt, with part of what she was to sell the Oil for, and to live, herself and her two Sons, upon the Residue, 'tis very likely she made considerable Advantage by the Sale; but whether she did, or no, is no great matter to us: It would indeed the better shew her, how plenteous in Goodness and Mercy God had been to her; but the Uses that *we*, at this distance, may best make of these Words, will be to consider, that when God had wrought an astonishing Miracle, (equal and alike to that which our Saviour wrought in multiplying a few Loaves to the satisfying thousands of People) the Prophet, by God's Direction certainly, bids her dispose of the Money, that should rise from the Sale of his Mercy, *first* to the Payment of her Debt, and *secondly* to the Sustenance of herself and Children.

*First*, She must pay her Debt, *Go, sell the Oil, and pay thy Debt*: the Debt was contracted by her dead Husband, but, by the Law, it became hers, or her Children's, as we see by the Distress she was in. That is a thing that Husbands should consider better of, than many of them do; they do not only leave their Relations comfortless, but involved in Debts, and loaded with Incumbrances, either to the endangering their Liberties, or cruelly perplexing them all their Life long. This indeed may sometimes happen, notwithstanding all the Care that a good Relation can take to prevent it; but it happens so often, that there must needs be either a faulty Negligence, or some Unkindness at the bottom. 'Twere better to make much less Provision for them, but to leave it clear and disentangled, than the Reputation of much Wealth, clogged with secret Debts and many Diminutions which they think not on, and to perpetual Claims and Contests which they know not how to manage. But whether this Prophet were to blame, or no, in leaving his Family thus in Debt, it does not appear; it only appears that his Family was in much Trouble about it, and that since God had enabled this Woman to pay his Debt, the Prophet *Elisha* lays it upon her to do it in the first Place, and that, before he gave her leave to live upon the Residue. I do not meddle with this Example, as it affords us an Instance of God's great Goodness, in so miraculously supplying the Wants of this poor Family; for it was a singular Case, and the Assistance such as neither Creditor nor Debtor could expect or ask, and consequently no one else, in the like Condition; but the Love  
and



and Good-liking that God appears to bear to *Justice* is very remarkable, in working a Miracle, that Justice might be done where it was due; for, the first Use that his Favour was to be put to, was, that *she should pay her Husband's Debt*. The like thing seems to have been done again, by the same *Elisba*, Chap. vi, when he caused the Iron to swim, against its natural Tendency, because the poor Man, from whose Hands it slipped, cried out to him, *Alas, Master, for it was borrowed!* Other Uses, indeed, were possibly intended, and made, of these two Miracles; but the recommending Justice, and the Discharge of our Obligations to such as lend to us on Trust, is such a Use of them as no one can avoid making: 'tis the first and plainest Use that can be made of these two Histories.

But I never knew any body want an Argument to convince them of the Justice of paying their Debts, although they never paid them: the very owning them to be *Debts*, is acknowledging them to be *due* and owing to their *Creditors*; and what is owing to another Man, is none of their own, and therefore they are not lawful Possessors of it, whilst the other suffers by the want of it: but they endeavour to satisfy themselves, as to the point of Justice, with either their *total* Inability, or their *present* Inability of discharging their Debts; together with a secret Purpose of doing it when they are able, or a Reserve of Hopes that they shall meet with some more favourable Juncture of doing it, than the present is to them.

The Reasonableness of doing Justice, and paying due Debts, is so settled in most People's Hearts, that few in the World can stand out in utter defiance of it, but are fain to impose, as it were, upon themselves, the same Excuses that they make to others, that they may be a little at quiet *within*, as well as *without*, from the Reproaches of their own Minds, as well as the Importunity of Creditors; and truly neither the Laws of God or Man can say more, in behalf of the Justice of paying our Debts, than what every Man's own Heart can, and does say to the same purpose: they only enforce the Discharge of Justice, with Promises of God's Favour, and Acceptance, and Rewards; and the Contempt of it with Threats of his Displeasure, and his Vengeance. Every body knows, that what they borrow is no longer, nor any otherwise *theirs*, than for the Use and Disposal of it, as is agreed, to the Content of both Parties, and for the Time contracted for; the Right and Property of that, or what is equal to it, still remains with the Lender, and nothing can, in Conscience, defeat it, but his own Consent and Will to depart from it. This is so plain, that no body is mistaken in it: and yet almost every Day brings us accounts of, I know not how many, sad Families, that are either ruined, or much endangered by the Credit they have given their Neighbours; in *most* of which Cases there must needs have been some notable Failure, in Point of Justice; for I will not venture to say it is so *in all*.

No great Matters can, perhaps, be carried on, without a great Stock; no extraordinary Advantages, without some great Hazard; and, to this Purpose, Men must use the Credit and Wealth of other People, because their own is not sufficient: This is ordinarily the Case, but it does not carry its Justification with it; for what have you to do to aim at Matters so far above your own Sufficiency to carry on? What Reason have you to be solicitous for extraordinary Advantages, at other People's Cost, who shall not share with you, in any Measure, tho' the Issue be successful; but shall be sure to be undone, if you be so? Let all the Venture and Hazard be your own, as you intend the Advantage shall; undo your own Wife and Children, if you can find in your Heart, and let not the Cries of other People's fall upon you; slight, if you will, the slow but prudent Ways of gaining moderate Wealth, by Patience, Diligence, and Industry, but slight them for yourself, and such as know and like your way of Management; and do not hasten to be rich with the Wealth of other People, who are content with moderate Profit,



Profit, and would not trust you if they knew you: You are not innocent enough, in not *intending* to do any others Mischief, if the Hazard you run of doing it be very great. If they are Partners with you, then they choose your Hazards, and must run your Venture; but if they are but bare Creditors, you have no right to venture their undoing, if you cannot otherwise secure them. I think it is *this hastening to be rich*, and endeavouring to make great Fortunes in a little Time, by most immoderate and excessive Gains, that makes a few Men become the Ruin of many Families, and contract so great Debts, that it is easier to resolve never to pay *any*, than to think of satisfying *all*; and that, we see, is generally the Conclusion. I know not with what Patience Men can consider the Poverty and Misery they have brought upon themselves and their own Families, by having ventured and lost their whole Estate, in Hopes of making some excessive Profit by the Return, altho' it were all their own: But one may see, that this must be a great deal easier, than to think of having ruined many *others*, together with themselves, who looked for no such Usage at their Hands, nor trusted what they lent upon such Bottom.

I own, that one may easily talk unskilfully in Matters of Trade; but I cannot see with what Honesty and Justice a Man can venture another's Wealth beyond what he is reasonably able to answer, supposing a Miscarriage, allowing for the common Accidents of Trade; because if he miscarry, he knows he cannot do that Man Justice by discharging his Obligations to him, and so he ventures an Injustice, (which is more than a good Man can do) tho' he do not actually intend it. Our Forefathers gained their Wealth with much more Certainty and Leisure; but their Estates wore better, and continued longer in their Families. Now Men seem vastly rich upon the sudden, set up for *Greatness* presently, and live profusely, and, in a little time, sink unaccountably, and carry their Acquaintance with them, to the Bottom.

This living, therefore, after so extravagant a manner, and so much above their Calling and Condition, and their true Estate, is another mighty Source of this Injustice. Men will *appear* much richer than they are, by all the outward Marks of Wealth, great Houses both in City and in Country, luxurious Tables, multitude of Servants, with Furniture and Equipage to Admiration; in order to obtain such Credit as may enable them (they think) to *be* indeed as rich as they *appear*. And this sometimes succeeds; the Reputation of Wealth has sometimes been the Means of getting Wealth, the Shadow has drawn on the Substance; but this is too great a Venture for an honest Man, if others be much hurt, supposing his Miscarriage; and too great for a prudent Man, though he alone should suffer by it; because the Wealth he must expend in these Appearances and Shews of Wealth, would, with Frugality and Wisdom, be a sufficient Bottom for his Industry to work upon, and he might live in Credit equal to his Calling and Condition; he only wants to moderate his Desires, and to learn to be content with an indifferent Sufficiency, and to live as he sees his honest and his sober Neighbours live, which his Estate would allow. Others content themselves (but God knows how) to live with this Extravagance, not with a greater Desire of *being* rich, than *appearing* so; because the appearing so answers their chief Design, which is to live profusely and luxuriously at other People's Cost. Here the Reputation of not wanting, is made the very means of supplying their Wants; their seeming Abundance gives them Credit, where a much better Bottom, with good Husbandry, would hardly find it. These People borrow with a certain Purpose of doing Injustice to those who lend, and with as certain a Purpose of spending the Fruits of their Injustice, in ways forbidden to People of their Condition, whose true Estate cannot afford them to live with such Profusion; and the very Reason for which these riotous Wasters contract so many Debts, namely, to live luxuriously, is the very thing that disables them from ever paying them: So that at the  
very



very time they enter into Obligations to be just, and pay their Debts, they cannot so much as with a serious Thought *intend* it.

Since, therefore, this living above ourselves, our Fortune and Condition, is found to be so easy a Snare, and so common a Temptation to fall into Injustice, and take undue Courses to feed that wasteful Humour, it is to be, at first, most carefully avoided.

Young Beginners cannot be too often warned against this sort of Ill-husbandry, that betrays them insensibly into many Inconveniencies: A sober and a frugal way of living will be best for them, in all Respects, for many Years; at least till they have overcome all Difficulties, and find themselves easy in their Condition. Young Traders, now-a-days, *begin* with living in such manner, as their *Masters* before them generally *ended*; but the Effect of that is often, that they almost end with their Beginning, or linger out a few Years, but in a constant visible Decay. They begin, 'tis true, with much a greater Bottom than their Masters heretofore did: But then they should consider, that together with the *Money*, all things else are changed; and so a greater Sum, at this time, is but equal to a less, some fifty or sixty Years ago; and therefore there is need of as much Industry and Application, as much Sobriety and Care, and good Husbandry, to improve their larger Stock, as their Masters exercised to improve their smaller one; and, indeed, without them, no Stock can be sufficient. The same Man will spend a little Stock sooner than a great one; but different Men will undo themselves with much the same Expedition, because their Lavishness will be measured by their different Stores, and so they may both of them end together.

Care, and good Husbandry, and Frugality, are so much the Qualities of a good *Citizen*, so necessary to the thriving in the World, the Occasions of so many good Things, and the Preventers of so many bad ones, that you will not think I have been recommending to you a vile, penurious, sordid way of living, or so distrustful an Anxiety as will not let you live with any Ease or Comfort, but cause you to contract so narrow a Habit of Mind, by a long Custom of living sparingly, that when you should obtain the Power and Means of living handsomely and freely, you should not yet be able to be willing to do it: This would be neither fit for me, nor good for you. I am, at present, only concern'd to say, that since an expensive way of living, above one's true Abilities, is (besides its other Dangers) a great Temptation to that Injustice I am speaking of, of borrowing, without a reasonable Prospect of Abilities to pay again, nothing can better secure you from this Snare, than setting out at first with great Caution and good Husbandry. Let not your *Table*, nor your *Furniture*, nor yet your *Wife* and *Children*, carry you beyond your just Abilities, upon the surest Computation you can make, without so fair and reasonable a View of future Success, as will justify you, even to your Creditors, upon Miscarriage. The Censures of an idle Neighbourhood will say, *You are a poor Man*, and worth but little; but you your self can add, that *you are honest* too, and all that little is *your own*: They will say, you live but *very meanly*; and you can add, *but very justly*: No body wants that which you have, no body claims it from you, or has any Title to it. And judge you which will give you the more Satisfaction, to be thought a substantial Man by *others*, or to know yourself a Man of *Honesty* and *Justice*. But you must live, you say, according to the *Reputation* you have in the World, or else must be despised, or, it may be, according to the *Dignity* of your *Office* and *Station*: Not, if it will engage you in Expence above your true Abilities, and run you into Debt: 'Tis better to be thought to live below yourself, than to know you live above what you can honestly afford; for that Expence is not *yours*, but somebody's else. Your *Reputation* is overvalued when you pay down any part of your *Honesty* to preserve it; your *Dignity* is not to be secured at the Expence of *Justice*; nor indeed is it, when once we come to know the Debt contracted by such Expences: Then *one* despises his



Vanity, and the *other* pities his Weakness, that would bring such Inconvenience on himself, *to make a Shew*; and he that is injured seeks his Reparations. So that betwixt them all, it had been better to have incurred the Note of either being covetous, or not sufficient for the Charge.

These things I have been led to say, from the Consideration of the Prophet's Direction to this poor Widow, whom God had so miraculously supplied, *to pay her Husband's Debt: Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt.* And since we may, now, no more expect than we deserve, to be miraculously supplied by God, for such a purpose, the readiest way to preserve our Honesty, and hinder us from this piece of Injustice, will be, to take all prudent Courses, not to contract such Debts, as we can hardly hope we shall be able to discharge. And because the hastening to be rich, aiming at extraordinary Matters, and grasping at more than we can hold, and the living at an Expence above our true Abilities, are the visible Sources of this sort of Injustice, from whence the Wrong and Ruin of so many poor Families are usually derived, the End I aim at would, I thought, be best attained, by speaking a little, of much that might be said upon those Articles.

The *other Use* of this Example is so visible and reasonable, that I hardly need to mention it, namely, that if ever it should please God to enable Men, Widows, or Children, either by some extraordinary Methods, or by some happy Accession of Estate, or by blessing their Industry and Labour, to enable them to pay their Debts, or those of their Husbands, or their Fathers, honestly contracted, they should be sure to do it: And tho' they may, in their Distress, have made their *Compositions* with their Creditors, and are acquitted *legally*, yet they should think themselves, in *Conscience*, Debtors still, till all is satisfied; and should oblige themselves, proportionably to their new Abilities, to make that Satisfaction; by which they would acquit themselves to God and to their own Hearts, as well as to their Neighbours, of the true Sense they have of doing Justice, and give an Example useful and edifying to all the World. This thing, methinks, is very plain; a Man must know himself a Debtor, tho' he should give no Bond or Security to him from whom he borrowed Money: And this he knows is the Case, when a Bond is given, but lost, and no Evidence remaining of it: The Courts of Judicature, perhaps, cannot relieve the Creditor, but the Debtor knows he is a *Debtor* still; his Obligation rises from the Sense he has of Justice, and the Conscience of having borrowed and not paid; he knows that nothing can acquit him but his Payment, or the other's *free* Release of his Debt. Now every body knows, that in *Compositions* the Release is not *free*, but with regard to Compassion, to Necessity, and to the Disability of the Debtor; and that if he were truly able to pay *the whole*, he would have no Release without it: When therefore he is able to pay the whole, his Conscience will oblige him to it, tho' the Law will not, unless the Creditors declare their Satisfaction, tho' they know the Change of his Condition. These things every Debtor may know, by making himself a Creditor in Supposition.

The *other part* of *Elisba's* Directions is, *and live thou and thy sons upon the rest.* What the Debt was, does not appear; but whatever it was, it was to be discharged, and then the Residue was at her Service: she might not dispose of the whole, to her own, or to any other's Use and Service, but must stay to see what was her own, which could not be done till the Debt was discharged; for the Debt was her Creditors, and could not be reckoned in: She could call nothing her own, but what remained to her after the Debt was paid; then she was free to use the rest. It may be you may think, that this being God's free Gift, he might dispose of it as he pleased; but that it is no binding Rule to others, who are not so dealt with. But, in truth, this Direction is most exactly reasonable and just: No body can believe, that what they have borrowed is their own; no body can compute he is worth *a thousand Pounds*, tho'



tho' he has it by him, who owes *five hundred*: He and his Children must not, therefore, live upon that thousand, but the half of it; and if he lives upon the whole, he lives upon his Creditors. The Way this poor Woman was enabled by, to pay her Debts, was, indeed, most extraordinary; but the Disposal of the Treasure, when she *was* enabled, is just what every Man's Reason and Conscience would suggest; *first*, be just to others, and *then*, do what you can for yourself. This Text furnishes us with no new Argument to inforce the Obligation of doing Justice in paying Debts, but gives us, in a proper good Example, an Occasion of considering what we know already, and what is written in all Men's Hearts; and when it says, that when our Debts are paid, we and our Families may live *upon the rest*, it says no new thing; for then we know, that the rest is truly ours, when no body else has any Claim or Title to it, and not till then; and till then we eat and drink at other People's Tables, and sleep in other People's Houses, and lie upon Strangers Beds; tho' we fancy we are never so much at Home, in our own Houses, at our own Table, with our own Furniture, yet this is truly the Case, where we owe more than we either can or will pay.

Much contrary, both to the Example in the Text, and to the Reason of it too, do our Debtors now-a-days advise and practise; their Rule is the reverse of the Prophet's Directions; *Go, and be sure to live, thou and thy Sons, in the first place, and let your Creditors have the rest, even all you cannot hinder them from getting*. Some of them are so villainous, that when they know they are undone, and in a little time intend to proclaim they are undone, yet they will borrow still; in order, they tell us, to support their miserable Families. Miserable Families indeed, that are to be supported by such Robberies; for neither Violence upon the High-ways, nor breaking our Houses open, can have more Falshood or more Malice in them, than such Borrowings have: Dungeons and strait Prisons were made for such People, and not such soft Confinements as allow them, nay, encourage them to spend their Spoil and Booty with great Ease and Luxury. If these People had had a true Compassion for their Families, and taken but half the Care they owed them, in wise and honest Courses, they might not have wanted a Provision so odious and unjust as this, which will rather bring God's Anger on them, than prove a Blessing and Support to them. But if *somebody's* Wife and Children must needs be distressed, why not *yours*? who, tho' they may be innocent and good themselves, yet have, by their Relation to you, more reason to suffer with you, than any body else that trusted you: Why must your Children be your Creditors Heirs, in spite of their Teeth, and inherit, as from *them*, such Fortunes as they could not have from *you*? and such, it may be, as those Creditors cannot afford to give their own Children? Live, you and your Children, on your own, and leave to others and their Children what is theirs; for they can neither want it, nor you keep it with your Innocence.

But since the Prison itself (which is the legal Punishment of Debt) allows us Life, and must provide for the sustaining it, is it unlawful, whilst at liberty, to subsist ourselves and Families, tho' if we should pay what we truly owe, we should not be able to subsist with what were left? This Enquiry would take up a great deal of time to answer it fully; at present therefore I only say, that they who are so straitened, ought to live as sparingly and meanly as is possible, that they may thereby do the less Injury (since some they will be sure to do) and be the sooner able to do Justice to whom they owe it: *Conveniencies* and *Ease* belong not to those (and much less any *Superfluities*) who cannot furnish *Necessaries* out of their own; and therefore that would be a Fault in them, considering their Condition, which would be innocent, and even commendable, were their Condition better: They must bear their own Burden, and the Hardships which either the Providence of God, or their own Carelessness, or Folly,



Folly, Luxury, or Injustice have laid them under; and their own Families must share their Fortune with them.

The Text allows me only to speak to the *Justice* that *Debtors* owe; but I dare not leave it so, without adding a Word or two, to the *Mercy* of *Creditors*. Not only Christian Charity, but common Prudence will oblige them to consider, whether more Patience and Forbearance than they sometimes shew, would not become them, and be useful to them: sometimes their Haste and Anger involve their Debtors deeper in Misfortunes, and perplex them more than there is need of; their Fears and their Distrusts break in with so much Violence upon the suspected People, that not having time to look about, nor call in that Assistance they might hope for from their Friends, they precipitate their Fall, which Leisure and Advice might have prevented, or at least much softened, and sometimes make them desperately resolve to be as wicked and unjust as they are unfortunate. This Case indeed is much more oft pretended, than it really happens; but since it sometimes happens, 'tis not only a Point of Wisdom, but of Humanity and Goodness, for a Creditor to consider it. When things are hopeless and past Remedy, the Rules of Mercy are then plain and more obliging, but still may be directed by the Knowledge we have of the Ways and Methods by which these People came to be Insolvent; for some of them are such as will justify great Rigour, others less; and others call for all Compassion and Forgiveness, and will not admit of any thing besides; and that is the safe side for all private Christians: and therefore I will end with our Saviour's good Words, *Be ye merciful, as your Father who is in Heaven is merciful.*



A  
D E F E N C E  
O F  
Praying before SERMON, as directed by  
the LV<sup>th</sup> C A N O N.

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*Part of a LETTER.*

“ --- **A** N D, as I very willingly, with your Advice and Approbation, took  
“ *holy Orders*, and am now, by your Favour, entring on the Mi-  
“ nistry to serve a *Cure*, I earnestly desire you would determine for  
“ me, what use I should make of the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*; i. e. whether I  
“ should turn the Heads of it into a Prayer, and say as some do, LET US PRAY; or  
“ use it as a Directory only, to tell the People what they are to pray for, repeating  
“ the very Words of the *Canon*, either PRAY YE, or YE SHALL PRAY.

*Answ.* As to the Request you make about the use of the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*; my Advice is,  
that you turn the Heads of it into a Prayer, and say, as some do---LET US PRAY.  
And that for these Reasons.

- I. Because the *Intention* of the *Canon* is fully answered by this Method.
- II. Because there is a seeming Impropriety of Speech in using the very Words of the *Canon*, which is avoided by making it a Prayer.
- III. Because there is a Concurrence of greater *Authority* in making it a *Prayer*, than in using the very Words of the *Canon*.

I. *First*, The *Intention* of the *Canon* is fully answered by making it a Prayer. The *Intention* of the *Canon* is plainly this:

1<sup>st</sup>, That the People may learn *for whom* they are to pray, for *all Christians*; for the *Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland*; for the *King, Queen, Prince*, and all the *Royal Progeny, &c.* In this Particular the *Canon* agrees with all the *Injunctions*, or *Bidding of Prayers*, that were set forth, and used, as well before the *Reformation*, as since, by *Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth*.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That the People might hear, and recognize the *Stile and Title* of their *Princes*, which they had taken upon them, and were due to them; such as *Defender of the Faith, and supreme Governor in these his Realms, and all other his Dominions and Countries, over all Persons, in all Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Temporal*; a thing the *Papists* utterly deny, and which many *Dissenters* scrupled of old, and many scruple still to acknowledge; as they also did, and still do, to pray for *Archbishops and Bishops*, as the *Canon* requires all Ministers and Lecturers to do.

3<sup>dly</sup>, The *Intention* of the *Canon* was certainly to restrain the Preachers from making any extravagant, impertinent, or tedious Excursions in Prayer, before their Sermons. The Heads and Matters they were to speak to, were but few, and that the *Canon* says, as *briefly as conveniently they may*.



Now the Intention of the *Canon* in these Particulars is certainly very fully answered, by turning it into a Prayer. The People are taught *for whom* they are to pray, by the Minister's praying himself, and exhorting them to join with him in Prayer, *for all Christians, &c.* And they are also taught to recognize the *King's Titles*, by hearing the Minister pray himself for the King by those Titles, and exhorting them to join with him in doing the like. And *lastly*, The Ministers, by turning the *Canon* into a *Prayer*, are as much restrained from all Impertinence and Tedioufness of Prayer, as they would be by barely repeating the Words of the *Canon*; for, *Let us pray*, is full as short as, *Ye shall pray*: And if there be any other Intention of the *Canon* than what is here mentioned, let it be what it will, it is as fully satisfied by, *Let us pray*, as by, *Pray ye*.

II. The Second Reason, why I advise you to turn the *Canon* into a Prayer, by saying, *Let us pray*, is, because there is a seeming Impropriety of Speech in using the very Words of the *Canon*, which is avoided by making it a Prayer. There is a Change of Person, without any visible Necessity, or indeed without any manner of Elegance. The Minister is to use the Words, *Pray ye*, or, *Ye shall pray*, five several times in the *Canon*, and then he is to change the Person, and take in *himself*; and to say, ---- " Finally, let us praise God for all those which are departed out of this " Life in the Faith of Christ, and pray unto God, that *we* may have Grace to direct " *our* Lives after their good Example; that this Life ended, *we* may be made Parta- " kers with them of the glorious Resurrection in the Life everlasting.

Can any one assign a Reason, why the People should not be taught and told by the Minister, *for whom* they are to *praise God*, as well as for whom they are to *pray to him*? Or can any one tell how, or why, the Minister comes to be more concerned to join with the People, in praying for Grace to follow the good Examples of the Saints who are gone before him, and to partake with them in everlasting Life, than to join with them in praying for the *Catholick Church*, the *King*, the *Clergy*, *Council*, and the *Commonalty* of the Realm, since this is certainly as much his Duty as the other? This, perhaps, may seem to some but a mere Nicety, but let it be no more, (tho', for my own Part, I think it a great Impropriety of Language) I see not why it should not be amended, when it may so easily be done by only saying, *Let us pray*, instead of *Pray ye*, or *Ye shall pray*. i. e. by the Minister's making himself a Party in the *Prayer*, as well as in the *Praise*, by joining with the Congregation as well at the *Beginning* as at the *Conclusion*. And tho' I do not think the People are very good Judges of proper or improper Language, yet some Regard should certainly be had to their Understanding and Comprehension of Things, and they should not be moved to stare and stand amazed, more than they needs must. It was very observable, that when the *Canon* was lately revived by order of my Lord Bishop of *London*, that the Generality of the Audience, as well understanding as uneducated People, as well the Friends of the Church, as the Indifferent, were astonished and surprized at the hearing the Change of Prayer; and when, upon Enquiry, they found that the Order came from *above*, and was designed to bring a great many Ministers of the *Church of England* to do their Duty, and to pray for King *George*, with all his Titles, the Judgment which the People passed immediately upon this Order, was, First, That it was very strange, that they who had taken the Oaths to King *George*, should want to be reclaimed so soon to their accustomed Duty; but next, and most especially, that the Use of the *Canon*, as it was read according to the Letter, was far from effecting the End intended by the Revival of it, which was, that the Ministers should pray for King *George*, with all his Stiles and Titles; whereas, as it was managed,



ged, the People were only told, *who was their King*, and were bid to pray for him; and to this Day, the People do not think that the Ministers pray for the King, who use the Letter of the *Canon*, who say, *Pray ye*, or, *Ye shall pray*. Now if the Judgment of the Congregation in this Matter, and the Censure that attends it, be worth the minding, why should it not be mended and made right, when it may be done, by so easy a Matter as the saying, *Let us pray*; by which it will appear to Men of the lowest Capacity, that the Ministers do also join in Prayer for the King themselves, as well as bid the People do it?

In 1637, Dr. *Heylin*, at the Request of Dr. *Curle*, Bishop of *Winton*, wrote a *Brief Discourse* touching the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*, which is printed among his Works. In this Discourse, he hath said all that can well be said, to prove the Form prescribed in that Canon, to be an *Exhortation and Direction of the Minister* to the People, to teach them what, and whom they are to pray for; and not an *Invocation, with an immediate Address to Almighty God*. And again in the same Page 152, he says, "It was not the Church's Purpose to bind her Ministers precisely to the Words, which are there laid down; but that in that very Form of Words, or other Words to that effect, they should move the People to be mindful of those particular Heads, for which they were to join with him, at the Close of all, in the Lord's Prayer." By this it should seem, that Dr. *Heylin* believed the *Canon* did only oblige the Minister to move the People to join with him in the *Lord's Prayer*, at the End and Close of all.

When I consider in what Times the Doctor wrote this Discourse, and how intolerably great and shameful the Abuse of *Pulpit-Prayers* became, by bold, and indiscreet, and popular Enthusiasts; I do the less wonder to find a Man of Dr. *Heylin's* Warmth and lively Spirit, to urge things to Extremity: The Provocations were above most People's Patience. But I cannot be of his Mind about this *Canon*, but truly think, that the Minister, without offending against this Canon, may with as much Reason, (and with more Propriety) join with the People in Prayer, at the Beginning, as at the End and Close of all; i. e. that the Canon will allow him, as well to pray for the Church, the King, &c. together with the Congregation, as to repeat with them the *Lord's Prayer*. And the

III. *Third Reason* I have for this Opinion is, That there is a Concurrence of greater Authority for making a Prayer of it, than for using the Words of the *Canon*, in the way of Exhortation or Direction only. And I believe, that most of the Examples, brought by Dr. *Heylin*, will better serve my Point than his. I shall make use of them as they lie in his Discourse, observing the Order of Time a little otherwise than he has.

In 1535, *Henry VIII.* issued out an Order in the Form following:

"This is an Order taken for preaching and bidding of Beads in all Sermons to be made within this Realm.

"First, Whosoever shall Preach in the Presence of the King's Highness, and the Queen's Grace, shall, in the Bidding of Beads, pray for the whole Catholick Church of Christ, as well Quick as Dead, and especially for the Catholick Church of this Realm: And First, as we be most bounden, for our Sovereign Lord King Henry the VIIIth, being immediately, next under God, the only supreme Head of this Catholick Church of England, &c.

Nothing can be more evident from hence, than that the Preacher was enjoined to pray himself for the Catholick Church of Christ, for the Church of England, for the King, the Queen, Princess Elizabeth, for all Archbishops and Bishops, &c.

In



In obedience to this Order, let us see how Bishop *Latimer* prayed in 1536, before the *Convocation*.

“ That all that I shall say, may turn to the Glory of God, your Soul’s Health,  
 “ and the edifying of Christ’s Body, I pray you all to pray *with me* to God, and  
 “ that also in your Petitions you desire that these two Things he vouchsafe to grant  
 “ us; first, a Mouth for me to speak rightly; next, Ears for you, that in hearing  
 “ me you may take Profit at my Hands; and that this may come to Effect, you  
 “ shall desire him, unto whom our Master Christ bad *we* should pray, saying even  
 “ the same Prayer which Christ himself did institute. Wherein \* *we* shall pray for  
 “ our Sovereign Lord the King, Chief, and supreme Head of the Church of *England*  
 “ under Christ: And for the most excellent, gracious, and virtuous Lady Queen  
 “ *Jane*, his most lawful Wife: And for all his, whether they be of the Clergy, or  
 “ Laity, whether they be of the Nobility, or else other his Grace’s Subjects; humbly  
 “ beseeching Almighty God, that every one of us, even from the highest to the  
 “ lowest, may, in his Degree and Calling, earnestly endeavour to set forth the Glory  
 “ of God, and the Gospel of his Son Christ Jesus: That so, living in his Fear  
 “ and Love, we may, in the end of our Days, depart out of this Life in his  
 “ Friendship and Favour. For these Graces, and what else his Wisdom knoweth  
 “ more needful for us, let us pray, as we are taught, saying, ----- *Our Father*  
 “ *which &c.*

No body can read this Prayer, but will find that Bishop *Latimer* is as much concerned in it, as any one of his Congregation; and that he does as openly join in the *Beginning* of it, as *at the End*; and as much in every Petition of it, as he does in the *Lord’s Prayer*. Nor can any one help seeing (who will compare them) that he takes Liberty to enlarge on the Particulars of King *Henry’s* Order, and keeps not exactly to the Words of it.

As soon as *Edward VI.* came to the Crown, he put out a Book of *Injunctions*, at the End of which is

*The Form of Bidding the Common-Prayers.* This is the Title; but the *Book of Common-Prayer* was not yet set forth, for this came out in 1547. The Form follows:

“ You shall pray for the whole Congregation of Christ’s Church, and especially  
 “ for this Congregation of *England* and *Ireland*, wherein, first, I commend to your  
 “ devout Prayers, the King’s most Excellent Majesty, *supreme Head, immediately*  
 “ *under God, of the Spirituality and Temporality of the same Church*; and for Queen  
 “ *Katharine Dowager*, and also for my Lady *Mary*, and my Lady *Elizabeth* the  
 “ King’s Sisters.

“ *Secondly*, You shall pray for my Lord Protector’s Grace, with all the rest of the  
 “ King’s Majesty’s Council: For all the Lords of this Realm, and for the Clergy  
 “ and Commons of the same, beseeching Almighty God to give every one of them  
 “ in his Degree, Grace to use themselves in such wise, as may be to God’s Glory, the  
 “ King’s Honour, and the Weal of this Realm.

“ *Thirdly*, You shall pray for all them that be departed out of this World in the  
 “ Faith of Christ, that they with us, and we with them, at the Day of Judgment,  
 “ may rest both Body and Soul, with *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom  
 “ of Heaven.

These *Injunctions* are to be found in *Sparrow’s Collections*, and other Books; but I have transcribed *this Form of King Edward* here, that you may see and compare it with the Prayers of Bishop *Latimer*, and Bishop *Gardiner*, three or four Years after,  
 and

\* In the printed Sermons it is ye.



and observe what Liberties they took to vary from the Words of it. The first is the Prayer that *Latimer* used, in 1550. After he had taken his Text, and proposed the Matter of it, he comes (as was then and long after the Custom) to *Bidding* of Prayers.

“ And that I may, at this Time, so declare them (*i. e.* the Points he proposed to speak to) as may be for God’s Glory, your Edifying, and my Discharge, I pray you *to help me* with your Prayers; in the which Prayers, &c. For the universal Church of Christ through the whole World, &c. for the Preservation of our Sovereign Lord King *Edward* the VIth, sole supreme Head, under God and Christ, of the Churches of *England* and *Ireland*, &c. Secondly, For the King’s most honourable Council: Thirdly, I commend unto you the Souls departed this Life in the Faith of Christ, that ye remember to give Laud, Praise, and Thanks to Almighty God, for his great Goodness and Mercy shewed unto them, in that great Need, and Conflict against the Devil and Sin, and that gave them in the Hour of Death, Faith in his Son’s Death and Passion, whereby they might conquer, and overcome, and get the Victory. Give thanks, I say, for this, adding Prayers and Supplications for yourselves, that it may please God to give you like Faith and Grace to trust only in the Death of his Dear Son, as he gave unto them: For as they be gone, so must we; and the Devil will be as ready to tempt us, as he was them; and our Sins will light as heavy upon us, as theirs did upon them; and we are as weak and unable to resist, as they were. Pray therefore, that we may have Grace to die in the same Faith as they did; and at the latter Day, to be raised with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and be Partakers with Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven. For this, and all other Graces, let us say the *Lord’s Prayer*.

That which is most observable in this Prayer, is, that altho’ he keeps to the three Heads of Prayer mentioned in the *Injunction*, yet he keeps not to the Words of them, but enlarges very amply on the last; and yet I dare say, he was not thought to offend against the *Injunction*. And altho’ he uses the Word of the *Injunction*, *I commend unto you*, &c. yet since, at the Beginning, he prays the Congregation to *help him with their Prayers*, for the Universal Church, &c. and at the latter End concludes with *we* and *us*, as he did in his Prayer before the Convocation in 1536. I take it for granted, that he did himself pray, as well as exhort the People to do so. As we shall also see in the Prayer which *Gardiner*, Bishop of *Winton*, made before the King in the same Year 1550.

“ Most honourable Audience, I purpose, by the Grace of God, to declare some Part of the Gospel, that is accustomed to be read in the Church at this Day; and that, because without the special Grace of God, neither I can speak any thing to your Edifying, nor ye receive the same accordingly, I shall desire you all, that *we may jointly pray all together*, for the Assistance of his Grace. In which Prayer, I commend to Almighty God, your most Excellent Majesty, our Sovereign Lord, King of *England*, *France* and *Ireland*, and of the Church of *England* and *Ireland*, next and immediately under God, here on Earth, *supream Head*; *Queen Katharine Dowager*, *my Lady Mary’s Grace*, and *my Lady Elizabeth’s Grace*, your Majesty’s most dear Sisters, *my Lord Protector’s Grace*, with all others of your most honourable Council, the Spirituality and Temporality. And I shall desire you to commend unto God with your Prayers, the Souls departed unto God in Christ’s Faith; and among those most especially our late Sovereign Lord King *Henry* the VIIIth, your noble Father. For these, and for Grace necessary, I shall desire you to say a *Pater-noster*, and so forth.

In the same Year, 1550, died *Martin Bucer*, at *Cambridge*, and *Dr. Parker* (afterwards Archbishop of *Canterbury*) preached his Funeral Sermon; towards the Close



of which he began his Exhortation, *ad Preces*. This was afterwards turned into *Latin*, and put into *Bucer's Opera Anglicana*, where it may be found. Dr. Heylin has transcribed a good deal of it, into his Discourse; which no body can read, but he will see that Dr. Parker did himself pray, as well as exhort the Audience to do so.

“ *Ut velum ignorantiae Cordibus nostris detrahatur, &c. coram Deo clemente & misericorde nos prosternamus, & piis precibus ab eo misericordiam invocemus &c. ut vocem Christi pastores unanimes audiant, & efficiamur unum Ovile &c. Precemur etiam pro nobis ipsis, ut &c.*

Whenever I find the *first Person plural* used by the Minister, I am sure the Minister does there pray himself, as well as exhort others to it: And in my Opinion, the Difference betwixt a Prayer by way of *Exhortation*, and one of *Invocation*, is greater in *Sound* than in *Sense*. Can any one see any great Difference betwixt the Minister's saying, ----- *Let us pray for Christ's Holy Catholick Church, that God would rule and govern it in the right Way*, ----- And this, ----- *We beseech thee, O Lord God, that it may please thee to rule and govern thy Holy Church universal in the right Way*: Both Priest and People will, I dare say, be thought to pray, as well in the *first*, as in the *latter Manner*.

“ It is worth our noting (saith Dr. Heylin) that presently upon the End of this Exhortation, or Bidding of the Prayers, used by Dr. Parker, there follow in the Book these Words ----- *Hic factæ sunt tacitæ preces*; by which we may perceive, that it was then the People's Practice, and is now our Duty, immediately upon the Bidding of the Prayers, or on the Preachers moving of the People to join with them in Prayer, to recollect the Heads recommended to them, and tacitly to represent them to the Lord in their Devotions, or otherwise to comprehend them in the *Pater Noster*, with which the Preacher is, by the *Canon*, to close up all.

I doubt not but this was truly so, as is represented; for Customs of long Continuance are not easily parted with, even when the original Reason of them ceases. Before the *Reformation*, the Prayers were all in an *unknown Tongue*, so that the People had little to do at Church, in the *Publick Service*, even when they were obliged to be there: This appearing to be very hard and unreasonable, and a great Abuse of the People's Patience, it was in time thought fitting, that the Priest should now and then apply himself to them *in their Mother Tongue*, and tell them for what particular Persons and Things they should pray; and when he had done this, he gave them a little space of time to do it in, and then proceeded in his *Latin Service*. One of the oldest Copies of such a Form of *Bidding Prayers*, is to be found at the End of *Anth. Harmer*: But a much better of the same kind, at the End of *Hamon L'Estrange's Alliance of Divine Offices*, sent to him from the University Library of *Cambridge*. This Custom, I say, of giving the People a little space of Time to say their *silent Prayers* in, might reasonably enough continue till 1550, and it may be a good while longer; for as the same Mr. *L'Estrange* observes, the *Injunctions* of *Edw. VI. 1547*, and even of *Q. Elizabeth, 1559*, were made before the reformed Liturgy was by Law established, by each of those Princes; and even when it was established by Law, and Morning and Evening Service were performed, as it now is settled, yet we may reasonably enough presume that the common People might want, as yet, to be instructed for what and whom they were to pray. But the Princes reigning had another End to serve by their *Injunctions*, and that was (as is shewn before) to be pray'd for by their proper *Titles*, which they had taken upon them since the *Reformation*, *supreme Head*, &c. which is not recognized or acknowledged in either *Morning* or *Evening Prayer*; and is therefore enjoined to be done in the *Pulpit* before Sermons. And were it not to serve this prudent End of Government, I have heard



heard some wise and worthy Men observe, that they could see but little Use, and less Necessity for *Canon* or *Injunction*, either to make or bid any Prayer at all, before the Sermon, after so full and solemn a *Service* as is just over, wherein the Congregation has been as much concern'd as the Preacher. But since there were, are, and will be (in all Likelihood) People who will not own and acknowledge their Princes to be in all Causes, and over all Persons, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, *Supreme Heads* and Governors, the *Canon* must still stand in its full Force, as the *Injunctions*, for their time, did: And that Matter is not now question'd; but whether, since the Custom of giving the People a short Time to say their Prayers in, is ceased, and has not been used these hundred Years last past, for any thing that I can learn, whether, I say, it be still reasonable to continue the Custom of *Bidding Prayers*, in the Way that Dr. *Heylin* means? For, as for the People's recollecting the Heads recommended to them, and tacitly presenting them to God in their Devotions, or comprehending them in the Lord's Prayer,----That is certainly done much better, and with less Trouble, and less Danger of Neglect, by the Minister's turning the *Canon* into a *Prayer*, and the People's joining with him in every Part and Petition of it, as well as with the *Lord's Prayer*, at the Close of all. And, after this long Digression, I come again to say, that Dr. *Parker*, by using so often the *First Person Plural*,----*Nostris*---*prostername*, *invocemus*, *efficiamur*, & *precemur*---did certainly pray himself for those Particulars, as well as bid the Audience do so. And since Bishop *Andrews* calls upon his Audience to join with him in Prayer, and uses the Phrases, *Invitemus huc Numen*; *precemur*, & *preces offeramus*; I shall take him to be on my side of this Question, till I see more Reason to the contrary. These Passages I take out of Dr. *Heylin*, for I have not the *Opuscula* by me. And as to the Passages directed to in his Book of *Sermons*, they shew not, with any Clearness, what his Method was; he might as well say, *Let us pray*,---as---*Ye shall pray*, for any thing that appears there to the contrary.

But let us see what Dr. *Parker's* Opinion was in 1560, when Archbishop. The V<sup>th</sup> Article of Enquiry, in his Metropolitcal Visitation, was, *Whether the Parson and Vicar pray for the prosperous State of the Queen's Majesty, as is prescribed in her Grace's Injunctions therein accordingly?* *Parker's Life*, Appendix, p. 18. The Words of the *Injunction* are, ----*And herein I require you most especially to pray for the Queen's most Excellent Majesty*, &c. The Article supposes the Parson or Vicar to pray himself for the Queen's Majesty, and obliged to do so by the *Injunction*; whereas the Words *I require you*, look as if the Parson or Vicar were bidding the People to pray for the Queen's Majesty. The best Way of reconciling these Things, is to consider the *Injunction* as directed to the Parson or Vicar, bidding him pray for the Queen's Majesty; for how should it be a Matter *presentable* by the Church-Warden, or *punishable* by the Bishop, for a Parson not to pray for the *Queen's Majesty*, by Virtue of the *Injunction*, if the *Injunction* does not oblige the Parson to pray for the *Queen's Majesty*? As certainly it does not, if he must only say to the People, *Pray ye*, or, *Ye shall pray*, for the Queen's Majesty; for he is not thereby understood to pray *himself*, but to bid *others* to pray.

We must make, I think, the same Construction of Archbishop *Whitgift's* Visitation Articles in 1589. one of which is, *Whether your Minister useth to pray for the Queen's Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, by the Title and Stile due to her Majesty, appointed by the Statutes of this Realm, and her Highness's Injunctions, and exhort the People to Obedience to her Highness, and other Magistrates being in Authority under her?* *Life of Whitgift*, p. 310.

No body can read this Article, but he will find in it that the Archbishop has a mind to know, whether the Minister of the Parish did himself pray for Queen *Elizabeth*, with the Stile and Title due to her, as he was obliged to do, by her *Injunctions*? But if  
the



the Minister of the Parish keep to the very Words of the Injunction, and herein I require you most especially to pray for the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, &c. how will it appear that he prays *himself*, who only requires the People to pray?

To make these Things consistent, it will not be quite enough to understand the *Injunction* as directed wholly to the Clergy, commanding them to pray for the Particulars therein mentioned, unless we also understand the Clergy not to be obliged to use those very Words, --- *I require you* --- but to answer the End and Purpose of them, by praying himself for those Particulars, as he certainly does, who uses the Words, --- *Let us pray*: For this will make good Sense, and good *English*, and reconcile the *Article* with the *Injunction*. And that this may appear as reasonable to you, as it does to me, you will do well to look into the *Canon*, which I will transcribe hither, and place the *Latin* over against the *English*, that you may see how they agree, and wherein they differ.

## L A T I N.

1. **P**recationis Formula, a Concionatoribus in concionum suarum ingressu imitanda.

2. Omnes Concionatores & Ministri, in aditu cujusque suæ Concionis, Lecturæ, & Homiliæ, Populum hortabuntur, ut fecum in Precibus concurrat in hunc aut similem modum, idque (quantum licet) summaria brevitate.

3. *Precamini* pro Christi Sancta Ecclesia Catholica, id est, pro Universo Cœtu Christiani Populi per Orbem terrarum diffusi & disseminati, specialiter verò pro Ecclesiis Angliæ, Scotiæ, & Hiberniæ.

4. Et in his præcipue pro Excellentissima Regia Majestate, Clementissimo Domino nostro Jacobo, Dei Gratia, Angl. Scot. Fran. & Hib. Rege, Fidei Defensore, & super omnes Personas, in omnibus Causis tam Ecclesiasticis quam Civilibus, intra Regna & Dominia sua supremo Governatore.

5. *Precamini* etiam pro Serenissima Regina Anna, Nobilissimo Principe Henrico, reliquaque Regia Sobole illustrissima.

6. *Precamini* etiam pro Ministris Divini Verbi & Sacramentorum, tam Archiepiscopis & Episcopis, quam cæteris Pastoribus & Curatis.

7. *Precamini* etiam pro Honoratissimis Regiæ Majestatis Consiliariis, ac Proceribus,

## C A N O N L V.

1. **T**HE Form of a Prayer to be used by Preachers before their Sermons.

2. Before all Sermons, Lectures, and Homilies, the Preachers and Ministers shall move the People to join with them in Prayer, in this Form, or to this Effect, as briefly as conveniently they may.

3. Ye shall pray for Christ's Holy Catholick Church, that is, for the whole Congregation of Christian People, dispersed throughout the whole World, and especially for the Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

4. And here I require you most especially to pray for the King's most Excellent Majesty, our Sovereign Lord James, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and Supreme Governor in these his Realms, and all other his Dominions and Countries, over all Persons, in all Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Temporal.

5. Ye shall also pray for our gracious Queen Anne, the Noble Prince Henry, and the rest of the King's and Queen's Royal Issue.

6. Ye shall also pray for the Ministers of God's Holy Word and Sacraments, as well Archbishops and Bishops, as other Pastors and Curates.

7. Ye shall also pray for the King's most Honourable Council, and for all the Nobility



ribus, & Magistratibus hujus Regni universis; ut hi omnes & singuli, in sua quisque vocatione, ad Dei Gloriam Populi ædificationem & rectam administrationem officiis suis diligenter & fideliter perfungantur, memores reddendæ olim Rationis, cum ad Christi Tribunal fistentur judicandi.

8. *Precamini* etiam pro Populo & Plebe hujus Regni universo, ut in vera fide, & Sancto Amore Dei, in humili erga Regem Obedientia & fraterna erga se invicem Charitate vitam suam instituant.

9. Postremò gratias & laudes Deo reddamus pro illis omnibus qui in Fide Christi ex hac vita excefferunt, humiliter Deo supplicantes, ut per illius Gratiam, vitam nostram ad pium eorum Exemplar dirigamus, ut ita tandem hac mortali vita defuncti, resurgamus cum illis in Die Jesu Christi ad cælestem gloriam & vitam æternam: Semper cum *Oratione Dominica* concludentes.

*lity and Magistrates of this Realm, that all and every of those, in their several Callings, may serve truly and painfully to the Glory of God, and the Edifying and well governing of his People, remembering the Accompt that they must make.*

8. *Also ye shall pray for the whole Commons of this Realm, that they may live in the true Faith and Fear of God, in humble Obedience to the King, and Brotherly Charity one to another.*

9. Finally, *Let us praise God for those which are departed out of this Life in the Faith of Christ, and pray unto God, that we may have Grace to direct our Lives after their good Example: That this Life ended, we may be made Partakers with them of the glorious Resurrection, in the Life everlasting: Always concluding with the Lord's Prayer.*

Upon reading and comparing the *Latin* Canon with the *English* one, you may observe that the one is not a verbal Translation of the other, tho' they were made by the same Persons, at the same Time, and upon the same Occasion, and printed in the same Year 1604: But they are equally *authentic*; and he who follows the one, does as well as he who follows the other; and I cannot find out which of them was composed first, the *English* or the *Latin*.

In the *English* it is, *ye shall pray*.

In the *Latin* it is, *Precamini*, pray ye, *imperatively*.

In the *English* it is, *I require you*.

In the *Latin*, there is no such Thing as *I require you*.

Other Differences there are, but I make use of none but the last; and that shall only be to infer from it, that he who leaves out those Words, *I require you*, complies as much with the *Canon*, as he who uses them, because the *Latin* is as much the *Canon* as the *English* is.

Another thing I would observe to you is, that there is no sort of Preface to the *Injunction*; but there is a very remarkable one to the *Canon*, for the Preachers and Ministers are bid to move the People to join with them in Prayer. From whence it is evident, that the Ministers are enjoined themselves to pray for the Church, for the King, and for other Particulars there mentioned, and to move the People also to join with them in praying for the same; for how can People join in Prayer with the Minister, unless the Minister himself pray? The Clergy were in truth the most suspected People of the Kingdom, and the most averse to owning the King for *Supreme Head*; and therefore the *Injunctions* of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and (at first) of Queen Elizabeth, were set out principally for the Clergy's sake, to be, as it were, a *Test* of their Loyalty, and Submission to the Changes that were made, especially that great one of the *Supremacy*, which if the Clergy once acknowledged, there was little doubt but the *Laiety* would easily come into; for, I think, as young as you are, you cannot but have ob-



served, that as the Clergy, generally speaking, are affected to their Governors, so are the *Laity*. It is therefore a great Absurdity in Politics, to think that the Clergy were not obliged to pray for the King as *Supreme Head* themselves, but only obliged to bid the People pray for him, as such. But I insist not upon political Reasons; I am fully persuaded, that the Preface to the *Canon* does not only justify, but was truly the Ground of the *Visitation Articles* of so many Bishops as I am going to produce in behalf of turning the Substance of the *Canon* into a *Prayer*. And for the greatest part of this Collection, I am obliged to a very eminent and worthy Person, of great Exactness and Fidelity, whom you may trust as you would my Eyes, which have also seen the greatest part of them.

In 1603, the Canons were made in *Latin* and *English*, and printed by Authority in 1604.

In 1604, the Bishop of *Oxon* in his Visitation, *J. Bridges*.

“ Whether do your Ministers, in their Sermons, pray for the King’s Majesty, &c.

It was the Custom heretofore for the Preacher to take his Text, make his Introduction, divide it into proper Heads, and then to bring in his *Prayer*, and then go on with his *Sermon*.

In 1604, Archbishop *Bancroft*.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King’s Majesty, with Addition of such  
“ Stile and Title, as are due?

The same Archbishop *Bancroft*, in his Metropolitane Visitation-Articles, for Ten Dioceses, in 1605.

“ Art. V. Whether doth your Minister use to pray for the King’s Majesty, and for  
“ the Queen’s Majesty, the Prince, and all their Royal Progeny, with Addition of  
“ such Stile and Titles, as are due, and appertaining to his Majesty?

Bishop of *Worcester*, 1607, *Gervase Babington*.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King’s Majesty, giving unto him such  
“ Stile and Title as, &c. and also in their Sermons pray for Archbishops and Bishops, &c.  
“ according to the LV<sup>th</sup> Canon.

Archdeacon of *Norfolk*, 1608, *Richard Stokes*.

“ If any Minister before the Sermon doth not pray for the Church, the King and  
“ Queen’s Majesty?

Archbishop *Abbot* in 1613.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King’s Majesty, with Addition of such  
“ Stile and Titles as are due?

Archbishop *Abbot*, in 1618, hath the same Article.

Bishop of *Lincoln* in 1618, *George Mountain*.

“ Hath your Minister, or any other Preacher, prayed for Christ’s Holy Catholick  
“ Church, the King’s Majesty, &c.

Bishop of *Oxon*, in 1619, *John Howson*.

“ Doth your Preacher in his Prayer, which he maketh at his Sermon, use to pray  
“ for his Majesty, &c. and in the like manner, doth he then pray for Archbishops,  
“ Bishops, &c.

Bishop



Bishop of *Norwich*, 1619, *John Overall*.

“ Doth the Minister use always to pray for the King’s Majesty, &c. giving them  
“ their full Titles, as in the Canon is required?

Bishop of *Norwich*, 1620, *Samuel Harsenet*.

“ Doth your Minister use always to pray for the King’s Majesty, the Prince, Cler-  
“ gy, and Council, in the Form of Prayer prescribed in the Constitutions, published  
“ in that behalf 1603?

Bishop of *Lincoln*, 1622, *John Williams*.

“ Hath your Minister, or any other Preacher, prayed for Christ’s Catholic Church,  
“ the King’s Majesty, &c. as is prescribed Can. LV.

Bishop of *Peterborough*, 1623, *Thomas Dove*.

“ Whether your Minister doth use to pray for the King’s most Excellent Majesty,  
“ in the same Form, and by the same Stile and Title due to his Majesty, set down  
“ and expressed in *Canon LV*?

Archdeacon of *Sudbury*, 1624, *Theophilus Kent*, A. M.

“ Doth your Minister, before his Sermon, pray for his Majesty, &c. and commend  
“ his Highness, &c. in his Prayer to Almighty God?

Bishop of *St. David’s*, 1625, *William Laud*.

“ Doth your Minister, before his Sermon, pray for the King’s Majesty, and ex-  
“ hort the People to Obedience?

Here I would stop a while, because it is at Bishop *Laud*, and would suppose an honest, sensible *Church-Warden* might offer, with all Modesty, a few such Words as these.

“ If, my good Lord, a Man can properly be said to pray *himself* for the King’s  
“ Majesty, by bidding *other People* pray for him, then I can safely say, our Minister  
“ does pray for the King’s Majesty, for he requires it of *us* every Sunday, before his  
“ Sermon. But if the Word *Pray* be taken in the Sense of *us* plain and common  
“ People, for addressing to God by himself, or in the Name of the Congregation, then  
“ I must answer *negatively*; for tho’ he always concludes with the *Lord’s Prayer*,  
“ yet that is not praying for the King’s Majesty, which was the Enquiry of your  
“ Lordship in the Article.

Archdeacon of *London*, 1626, *Thomas Paske*.

“ Doth he use the Form of Prayer, before the Sermon, for the King’s Majesty?

Bishop of *Norwich*, 1627, *Samuel Harsenet*.

“ Doth your Minister use always to pray for the King’s Majesty, as in the *Canon*  
“ is required?

Who would not from hence conclude, that the *Canon* required the Minister himself to pray for the King, and not only to name the King as a Person for whom the *Peo-ple* were to pray?

Bishop



Bishop of *Oxon*, 1628, *John Howson*, translated to *Durham* this Year.

“ Doth your Preacher, in his Prayer which he maketh at his Sermon, use to pray  
“ for the King’s Majesty?

Bishop of *Oxon*, 1629, *Richard Corbet*.

“ The same Words with his Predecessor *Howson*.

And if the same Words, on the same Occasion, may imply the same Thing, then I should think that these two Bishops did not believe the Clergy were so strictly tied up to the Words of the Canon, but that they might make a Prayer of their own before the Sermon, provided they prayed for the King with his Titles, and for all other the Particulars prescribed in the Canon, *with all convenient Brevity*, which is a Circumstance always to be remembered.

Bishop of *Norwich*, 1629, *Francis White*.

“ Doth your Minister use always to pray for the King’s Majesty, and giving them  
“ their full Titles, as in the *Canon* is required?

Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, 1630, *Walter Curle*.

“ Doth your Minister, in his Prayer, before his Sermon, use to pray for the  
“ King’s Majesty, &c. The same again, in 1633, when he was Bishop of *Winton*.

Bishop of *Lincoln*, 1630, *John Williams*.

“ Doth your Minister, before his Sermon, Lecture, or *Homily*, pray for the King’s  
“ Majesty, &c. following that Form of Prayer prescribed in the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*?

Archdeacon of *London*, 1632, *Thomas Paske*.

“ Doth he use the Form of Prayer, before the Sermon, for the King’s most excel-  
“ lent Majesty, &c.

Bishop of *Oxon*, 1632, *John Bancroft*.

“ Hath your Minister in his Prayer, before the Sermon, used to pray for the King’s  
“ Majesty?

Bishop of *Peterborough*, 1633, *Augustine Lindfell*.

“ Doth your Minister observe the Form of Prayer, before his Sermon, that is pre-  
“ scribed by the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*, therein moving the People, as they are there directed,  
“ to join with him in Prayer, for Christ’s Holy Catholick Church, &c. always con-  
“ cluding with the Lord’s Prayer?

Archdeacon of *Gloucester*, 1633, *Samuel Burton*.

“ Doth he use to pray for the King’s Majesty, &c. and for all Archbishops and  
“ Bishops, according to the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*?

Archdeacon of *Norfolk*, 1634, *Robert White*.

“ Doth your Minister, always before the Sermon, pray for Christ’s Holy Catho-  
“ lick Church, &c. And doth he always conclude his Prayer with the Lord’s  
“ Prayer, according to the Canon LV?

Archbishop



Archbishop of *Canterbury*, 1635, *W. Laud*.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King’s Majesty, &c. ?

Archdeacon of *Berks*, 1635, *John Ryves*.

“ Doth your Minister, before and at the beginning of every Sermon, move the  
“ People to join with him in Prayer, in such Manner and Form, and to such Effect  
“ as in the LV<sup>th</sup> Constitution is prescribed ?

Bishop of *Hereford*, 1635, *Matthew Wren*.

“ Doth your Minister, Preacher, or Lecturer, before his Sermon, or Homily, if  
“ he read one, use any Form of Prayer, of his own inventing or choosing ? Or doth  
“ he contain himself within that brief Form only, which is prescribed in the LV<sup>th</sup>  
“ Canon, thereby to move the People to join with him in Prayer for, &c. and doth  
“ he always conclude it with the Lord’s Prayer ?

Bishop of *Norwich*, 1636, *Matthew Wren*. *Injunctions*.

“ That the Prayer before the Sermon be exactly according to the LV<sup>th</sup> Canon,  
“ *mutatis mutandis*, only to move the People to pray, in the Words there pre-  
“ scribed, and no otherwise, unless he desires to interpose the Names of the two  
“ Universities, and of a Patron; and no Prayer to be used in the Pulpit after Ser-  
“ mon.

Bishop of *Norwich*, 1636, *Matthew Wren*. *Visitation*.

“ Doth he, before his Sermon, or Homily, use any Form of Prayer, which is of  
“ his private conceiving or collecting, and of his own inventing or choosing ? Or doth  
“ he contain himself within that brief Form only, which is prescribed by the Church  
“ in Canon LV, to move the People to join with him in Prayer ?

Here it will be convenient to observe to you, that in 1641, amongst the many Articles which the *House of Commons* sent up to the *House of Lords*, against Bishop *Wren*, part of the XI<sup>th</sup> Article is,

“ That endeavouring to suppress the Benefit and Power of Prayer, in 1636, he  
“ enjoined, that no Minister should use any Prayer before his Sermon; but move the  
“ People to pray, only in the Words of the L<sup>th</sup> (it should be the LV<sup>th</sup>) Canon, made  
“ in 1603. *Rushworth*, Vol. IV. p. 352.

The Words of Bishop *Wren’s Injunctions* are truly cited by the *House of Commons*. But if those Gentlemen had had the Candor of fair and equal Judges, they might have seen, that in 1635, the same Man, when Bishop of *Hereford*, as well as in 1636, when Bishop of *Norwich*, had used the Words of the Canon, ----- *to move the People to join with him in Prayer*, which were left out, ’tis probable, *by chance*, in his *Injunctions*, since the *Injunctions* were directed to the same Clergymen as the *Visitation-Articles* were sent to, and presently after, in the same Year, and could not therefore be done with any Design to suppress the Power of Prayer. But since the leaving out of these Words,----- *to join with him in Prayer*, became a matter of Accusation, (for had those Words been in, they must have accused the *Canon itself*, and not the Bishop) ’tis plain that the *House of Commons* believed those Words, *to join with him in Prayer*, were very significant, and did sufficiently authorize the Minister to pray himself, and not only to bid the People pray for, &c. But since those People who are for strictly adhering to the *Letter* of the *Canon*, are such as will not pay (as indeed I think they do not owe) any great Reverence to the Judgment of *this House of*



*Commons*, I will not insist upon it, but will make Bishop *Wren* himself the Judge, whether it be lawful to pray otherwise than the *Canon* requires, in some Particulars? If it be not, how comes he to allow the Minister to pray for *either University*, or *both*, or for any private *Patron*? The *Canon* mentions no such Thing, or Person: He had seen it done in *Cambridge*, where he was bred; there he might hear Men praying for the *Chancellor*, *Vice-Chancellor*, *Proctors*, *Taxers*, and for particular *Colleges*, &c. But not a Word of this in the *Canon*: The *Parliament* itself, when sitting, is not mentioned in the *Canon*; and therefore if the *Canon* is to be the Rule from which the Preacher is not to vary in the least, how comes the *Parliament*, *Oxford*, or *Cambridge*, or any private *Patron*, to be prayed for, before Sermon? And what Authority has any single Bishop to allow such thing? The true Answer to this is, *Custom hath authorized it*: And I allow it for a good Answer, but you must also take this along with you, that since this was customary long before the *Canon*, and customary when the *Canon* was made, and hath been customary *ever since*, it is not to be presumed that the *Canon* should so strictly oblige Men to adhere to the Letter of it, as not to suffer the least Variation; and therefore they who over rigidly exact this at the Preacher's hands, do not enough consider what they do, condemning thereby not only the *two Universities*, but every single Clergyman throughout the Kingdom, who I dare say has varied from the *Canon*, either by adding something in his Prayer that was not in the *Canon*, or leaving out something that was. But enough of this.

Archbishop of *Canterbury*, 1636, *William Laud*.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King's Majesty, &c? ”

Archdeacon of *Suffolk*, 1636, *Robert Pearson*.

“ Have your Ministers used continually before their Sermons, the Form of Prayer prescribed in the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*? ”

Archdeacon of *Norfolk*, 1637, by *William Lewin* Official.

“ The same Words with Bishop *Wren*, in 1636. ”

Bishop of *London*, 1637, *William Juxon*.

“ Doth your Minister, in his Prayer before Sermon, observe the Directions of the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*, as well for Form as for Matter? ”

Archdeacon of *Worcester*, 1637, *Edward Thornborough*.

“ Doth your Minister, before his Sermon, use the Form of Prayer prescribed by the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*? ”

*Commissary General* to the Archbishop of *Canterbury*.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King's Majesty, &c? ”

Bishop of *Oxon*, 1638, *John Bancroft*.

“ Hath your Minister, in his Prayer before his Sermon, used to pray for, &c? ”

Archbishop of *Canterbury*, 1638, *William Laud*.

“ Doth your Minister use to pray for the King's Majesty, &c? ”

Bishop of *Norwich*, 1638, *Richard Mountague*.

“ Be his Prayers, before and after Sermon, drawn out at length to equal, if not exceed his Sermon? Or doth he, as he should, conform himself to the Prayer which is recommended as a Form, *Canon LV*, consisting of Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving? ”

These



These Articles were printed at *London*, but so faultily, it seems, that the Bishop disavowed them, and printed them again at *Cambridge*; and in the Article before us, made the following Change.

“ Or doth he (as he should) conform himself unto the Words which are commended as a Form, *Canon LV*, consisting of Prayer for all Estates of Men, and of Praise or Thanksgiving, &c ?

One great Abuse of the *Pulpit-Prayers*, was their insufferable Length and Tedioufness, which the *Canon* did unquestionably intend to prevent and hinder, by appointing them to be composed *as briefly as conveniently they may*. But from hence we may also conclude, that they who composed the *Canon*, did not intend to tie Men strictly to the Letter of it, or oblige them to use no other Words; for if they had intended that, what need they talk of *convenient Brevity*, when the very Form was prescribed? For how can any Form, from which we must not vary in the least, be either *longer* or *shorter* than it is?

Bishop of *Gloucester*, 1640, *Godfrey Goodman*.

“ Doth your Minister, in the Prayer used immediately before the Sermon, use to pray for the King's Majesty, &c. and observe all other things prescribed in the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*? And doth he also use to pray for the Archbishops and Bishops, &c ?

Bishop of *London*, 1640, *William Juxon*.

“ Doth your Minister, as well before the Homily as before the Sermon, move and exhort the People to join in Prayer, according to the Form laid down in the Book of *Canons*? And doth he use any other Form than is there prescribed?

Here I must ask again at last, as I did at first, whether it be possible for a Minister to move the People to join with him in Prayer, for any Person or Thing, unless the Minister himself pray for that Person or Thing? With what Propriety of Speech can a Bishop ask a Minister, whether he prays for the King, as *Supreme Head*, if he only means, do you *bid the People pray* for the King, as *Supreme Head*? Or how can the Minister truly answer,---- *Yes, I do pray for him*, by *bidding the People do so*; since this is not the common and accustomed use of the Words? The People are not only to pray for the King themselves, but they are to join with the Minister, in praying for him. So says the *Canon*, *The Minister is to move the People to join with him in Prayer for the King*, &c. Therefore, say I, the Minister must himself pray, or else I know not how the People should join with him. But it is, it seems, to be *according to the Form laid down in the Book of Canons*. Very right, according to the Heads of Prayer laid down in the *Canon*, but not according to the very Words of it, but to the same effect, or, as in the *Latin*, *in hunc aut similem modum, in this or the like manner*, and *as briefly as you may conveniently*. You are to pray after the following Manner, or something *like* the following Manner, and you are to be as short as you well may; by which 'tis evident, that you are at Liberty to take your own Way, and to use your own Words, if you preserve the Heads and Substance of the Form, and do it with a reasonable *Conciseness*. In the *Injunctions* of *Henry*, *Edward*, and *Elizabeth*, concerning Prayers before Preaching, there was nothing said of the Minister's *moving the People to join with him in Prayer*; nothing said of ---- *according to this Form*, or *to this Effect*, or *after this or the like Manner*; nothing said of *convenient Brevity*, or Length of Prayer: But the Words were set down just as they were to be used. But in the *Canon* all these Particulars are mentioned, and are to be observed:



served: The Minister is to pray himself; and he is to do it in some such Method as this proposed; and his Prayer must not be over long. These things make some considerable Difference betwixt the *Injunctions* and the *Canon*, and it will better appear by looking over the *Latin* as well as the *English*.

The last Authority that I will add, shall be of the Bishop of *Lincoln* in 1641, *John Williams*.

“ Do you know of any Parsons, Vicars, or Curates, that never pray before the  
“ Sermon, but *bid the People pray*?

The Inference from hence is plainly this, that according to the Bishop's Judgment, a Minister was not thought to *pray* before his Sermon, who only *bid the People pray*; or who used those Words, *Ye shall pray*. And will it not from hence follow, that if this Bishop, or any other Bishop, should ask a Clergyman, whether, before his Sermon, he prayed *for the Church*, or *King*, or *Archbishop*, &c. he did not mean to know by the Answer, whether the Minister did *himself* pray for those Particulars, or only *bid the People pray for them*?

And thus I think I have done what I promised you, in shewing there is greater Concurrence of *Authority*, for turning the Substance of the *Canon* into a *Prayer*, than for using the very Words of the *Canon* in the Form there laid down, by *bidding the People pray*: And I cannot help thinking, that whoever will consider thoroughly the *Preface* and the *Title*, which is in *Latin*, *Precationis Formula a Concionatoribus* (not *sequenda*, nor *repetenda*, nor *usurpanda*, but) *imitanda*, will conclude as I do, *That the Clergy were left at Liberty to compose a Prayer of their own, before their Sermons, only taking care to pray for the King with his proper Stiles and Titles, and for every other particular Person, Body, or Thing, prescribed in the Canon, with all convenient Brevity, and concluding all with the Lord's Prayer*.

But though I think that this is clear, to a Demonstration, yet the Liberty I would advise you to take, is only to turn the *Canon* into a *Prayer*, by saying, *LET us PRAY*, instead of *Ye shall pray*: And since this little Variation answers the Purpose and Intention of the *Canon* in all Points; since it makes good Sense, and good *English*; and since it is justified by so many great Bishops, and by a constant Practice; I am of the Opinion, that nothing reasonable, or worthy of Consideration, can be objected to it, but what may very easily be answer'd. However, such Objections as they are, I will give you my Opinion of them, in as few Words as I can.

And First: A Pulpit-Prayer is said to be virtually excluded by *Acts of Parliament*, 2d and 3d *Edw. VI.* and 1st *Eliz.*

In these Acts the Clergy are said to be commanded---“ to say and use the Mattins,  
“ Even-Song, and Administration of each of the Sacraments, and all other common  
“ and *open Prayer*, in such Order and Form as is mentioned in the same Book, (*i. e.*  
“ the Book of *Common Prayer*) and none otherwise;---- and if any shall refuse to  
“ use the said Common Prayers, or to minister the said Sacraments,----- in such  
“ Order and Form, as they be mention'd and set forth in the said Book, or shall use,  
“ wilfully and obstinately standing in the same, any other Rite, Ceremony, Order,  
“ Form, or Manner of Mattins, Even-Song, Administration of Sacraments, or other  
“ *open Prayer* than is mention'd and set forth in the said Book, shall for the first  
“ Offence, &c.

“ *Open Prayer*, in and throughout this Act, is meant Prayer which is for others  
“ to come unto, or hear either in common Churches or private Chapels, or Ora-  
“ tories, commonly called, *the Service of the Church*.

From



From this Explanation of what is meant by *Open Prayer*, in these *Acts*, it is supposed by some, that a *Pulpit Prayer* may be called an *Open* Publick Prayer in a Common Church, for others to come unto, or hear, and is consequently forbidden to be used.

But if by *Open Prayer* be only meant the *Common Prayer*, or *Service of the Church*, (as the *Act* explains itself) or every *Office* contained in the Book of Common Prayer, such as *Morning Prayer*, *Evening Prayer*, the *Litany*, the *Office of Baptism*, the *Communion Service*, the *Office of Matrimony*, *Visitation of the Sick*, and *Burial Office*: If every *Office* contained in the Book of Common Prayer be meant by *Open Prayer*, and nothing else meant thereby in these *Acts*, then this Objection is nothing worth. Now it is but reading the *Act* to be convinced, that nothing else is meant thereby.

*Open Prayer in and throughout this Act, is meant Prayer which is for others to come to, (as it is distinguished from Private Prayer) commonly called, the Service of the Church.*

Again,----The Clergy are to say or use the *Mattins*, *Even-Song*, and *Administration of each of the Sacraments*, and all other *Common* and *Open Prayer*, (i. e. any other *Office* or *Service*) in such *Order* and *Form* as is mentioned in the same Book, and none otherwise. Is it not manifest from thence, that *Open Prayer* is that which is mentioned in the Book of Common Prayer? and therefore is some *Service* or other that is appointed in that Book.

So again: "If any one shall compel, or cause, or otherwise procure or maintain any Parson, Vicar, or other Minister, in any Cathedral or Parish Church, or Chapel, or any other Place, to sing, or say, any Common and *Open Prayer*, or to Minister any Sacrament otherwise, or in any other Manner or Form than is mentioned in the said Book; or that by any means shall unlawfully interrupt, or let any Parson, Vicar, or other Minister in any Cathedral, Parish Church, or Chapel, to sing, or say, Common and *Open Prayer*, or to minister the Sacraments, or any of them, in such Manner and Form as is mention'd in the said Book: ---- That then, &c.

From all these Places, and from all others, where mention is made of *Open Prayer* in these *Acts* of *Parliament*, nothing is meant thereby but some *Office*, or part of the *Publick Service*, contained in the Book of Common Prayer: And the Purpose of the whole *Act*, 2d and 3d *Edw. VI.* and 1st *Eliz.* is to confirm the Book of Common Prayer, and to tell the Subjects, that no other *Morning Service*, or *Evening Service*, no other *Office of Baptism*, of the *Communion*, of *Matrimony*, *Visitation of Sick*, or *Office of Burial*, is to be used by any Clergymen, in any Church, or Chapel, or other Place appointed for the publick Worship, but those *Offices* or *Services* which are appointed for those Purposes in the *Book of Common Prayer*. And this is manifest from the Preface or Preamble of the 2d and 3d *Edw. VI.*

"Where of long time there hath been had, in this Realm of *England* and in *Wales*, divers Forms of Common Prayer, commonly called the *Service of the Church*; that is to say, the Use of *Sarum*, of *York*, of *Bangor*, and of *Lincoln*, and besides the same now of late, much more divers and fundry Forms and Fashions have been used in the Cathedral and Parish Churches of *England* and *Wales*, as well concerning the *Mattins* or *Morning Prayer*, and the *Even-Song*, as concerning the Holy Communion, &c." The King had now appointed one uniform Order to be used by all Ministers, and no other, under such and such Penalties, &c. But to put it out of all doubt, read the Provisions that are made. "V. And it shall be lawful to have the said Prayers heretofore specified of *Mattin* and *Even-Song*, in *Latin* or any such other Tongue, saying the same privately, as they do understand. VI. And for the farther Encouragement of Learning in the Tongues,



“ in the Universities of *Cambridge* and *Oxford*, to use and exercise, in their Com-  
 “ mon and *Open Prayer*, in their Chapels, (being no Parish Churches) or other  
 “ Places of Prayer, the *Mattins*, *Even-Song*, *Litany*, and all other Prayers (the  
 “ Holy Communion excepted) prescribed in the said Book, in *Greek*, *Latin*, or  
 “ *Hebrew*.

Nothing can possibly be more evident from hence, than that nothing is call'd *Open Prayer*, but what is contained and prescribed in *the Book of Common Prayer*: And this the Scholars have leave to translate and use in what Language they please, except the *Communion-Service*, which must be in *English*.

“ VII. Provided also, that it shall be lawful for all Men, as well in Churches,  
 “ Chapels, Oratories, or other Places, to use openly any Psalms, or Prayer, taken  
 “ out of the Bible at any due Time, not letting or omitting thereby *the Service*, or  
 “ any Part thereof, mentioned in the said Book.

This last Provision might with more Reason be urged in Justification of *Pulpit-Prayers*, provided the Minister take care to use Scripture-Expression, than any Part of the Act can be urged against them; but I dare say, the Act intended nothing on either side of the Question. There is much the same Prohibition in the *Scottish Canons*, (as I find it in Dr. *Heylin's* Life of Archbishop *Laud*, p. 300.) “ XV. That  
 “ no Presbyter, or Reader, be permitted to conceive Prayers *Extempore*, or use any  
 “ other Form in the *publick Liturgy* or *Service*, than is prescribed, under Pain of  
 “ Deprivation from his Benefice or Cure.” Whenever therefore you hear of *Acts of Parliament* that are urged against *Pulpit-Prayers*, do but turn to those *Acts*, and read them carefully, and you will find they say nothing to the purpose for which they are cited; and that by *Open Prayer* to understand a *Pulpit-Prayer*, because it is *open* to all Comers and Hearers, is, in truth, not to read the *Acts* with Understanding, but to play with the Ambiguity of Words.

Another Objection against *Pulpit-Prayers* is, the Uselessness, Unseasonableness, and indeed the Impertinence of them, after we are just come from performing the full Service of *Morning* or *Evening-Prayer*, and nothing intervening but singing a short Psalm. To this Objection I make no other Answer, but that I think in my Conscience, 'tis full as useless, as unseasonable, and as impertinent, to tell the People for what Things, and for what Persons they are to pray, after they have just finished their *Morning* or *Evening-Service*, as it is for the Minister to bid the People join with him in Prayer for those particular Things and Persons mention'd in the *Canon*. And therefore let those People who railly never so pleasantly, and those who never so tragically exclaim against the *Pulpit-Prayer*, as useless and impertinent, consider whether what they say does not as much affect the *Bidding Prayer*, as the *making a Prayer* of equal Brevity, such as the *Canon* expressly requires, *Summariâ (quantum licet) brevitate*. And if it be said, that the King's *Titles* must be recognized before the Sermon, which is not done in either *Morning* or *Evening-Prayer*, I say so too; but I still say, it is no more impertinent to recognize them in a *Formal Prayer*, than in *Bidding of Prayer*.

Another Objection against *Pulpit-Prayers* is, the constant Practice of *the University of Cambridge*, in Favour of *Bidding Prayer*, according to the Letter of the *Canon*. And the short Answer to this might be, that it has not been, nor is, the constant Practice of *the University of Oxford*, always *Orthodox*, always *Canonical*! But since these kind of Answers do rather silence than convince, what if I should venture to affirm, that Eight in Ten of those who in *Cambridge* are for the *Bidding Prayers*, do, when they remove from thence, either turn the *Canon* into a *Prayer*, or *make a Prayer* of their own, before Sermon? Is it because they quite forget the *Canon*, or neglect it, when they leave their *Colleges*? Or do they read and understand it



it differently when they come to *London*, or their *Parish Churches*, from what they did whilst in the *University*? The Truth, I believe, is, that in each Place they are governed by *Custom* and *Example*; in *Cambridge* they hear of nothing but *Bidding of Prayer*; in other Places it is customary to *pray* before the Sermon: But I do not hear that they so far complement their *University-Judgment*, as to prefer it before their *Town-Judgment*, or think they were better Observers of the *Canon* heretofore, than they are now. In the *University*, People's Heads may be subtil and distinguishing enough, to call the LV<sup>th</sup> Canon "*A Form of Prayer*, merely because of the Lord's Prayer, which is at the end of it, and with which all Ministers are obliged to conclude, and in which they are supposed to pray for all things mentioned in the Canon, as may be gathered from the Form used by Bishop *Latimer*, Bishop *Gunning*, Archbishop *Sancroft*, and many others, who go off from the *Bidding Prayer*, to the Lord's Prayer, with Words to this Purpose,----For all these things now mention'd, ye shall say,----*Our Father*, &c.

But when People come out of the *University*, into the *World*, they seem to talk a little plainer, and to require some better Proof of the LV<sup>th</sup> Canon's being a Form of Prayer, than merely because it ends with the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer can make nothing to be a Form of Prayer, that is not so without it; it is a most blessed Adjunct, but it changes not the Nature of what it is joined to; and though it is a most comprehensive Prayer, and that in the using it we are understood to pray (as our Catechism does admirably well explain it) *for all things needful both to the Soul and Body*; yet neither *Injunction*, nor *Canon* would ever trust the *King's Titles*, nor those of *Archbishops*, to the Lord's Prayer, but mentions them expressly, and as expressly requires them to be prayed for by Name, and that too, long before they come to conclude with the Lord's Prayer. So that it is not the Lord's Prayer that makes the LV<sup>th</sup> Canon to be a Form of Prayer. The Title of it is ---*The Form of a Prayer*, but it is not of itself a Prayer, 'till the Minister make it so, by turning the Substance of it into a Prayer, and then moving the People to join with him in it. *Ye shall pray* (says the Minister to the People) *for Christ's Holy Catholick Church*, &c. But is this all? No certainly; the Canon says, *The Ministers shall move the People to join with them* (Ministers) *in Prayer for Christ's Holy Catholick Church*, &c. And now let the Ministers see how this can be done without *their* praying *for Christ's Holy Catholick Church*, &c. The *Injunctions* of *Henry*, *Edward*, and *Elizabeth*, did none of them (as I have before observ'd) command the Minister, in express Words, to join in Prayer with the People, but only to bid the People pray; but yet the Reason of the thing often constrain'd them to do it, without Command. So Bishop *Latimer*;---*I pray you all to pray with me to God*, &c. And so again,----*I pray you to help me with your Prayers*, &c. And so Bishop *Gardiner*,----*I shall desire you all, that we may jointly pray all together for*, &c. But this the Canon of 1603 expressly requires of the Minister; and indeed without his making himself a Party in the Prayer, it is a vain thing to command him (as the Preface plainly doth) to move the People to join with him in praying for, &c. As to Bishop *Gunning*, I can make no Answer to it, having seen his *Visitation-Articles* only, but none of his Prayers. But since the Authority of Archbishop *Sancroft* is cited on this Occasion, I have his Prayer by me, and am content that the Matter in Debate should be wholly determined by it, and will therefore transcribe it, make some few Observations on it, and leave it to your Judgment.

When he has divided his Text into three Heads, he says; " These are the Parts,  
 " [of which, that I may so speak, and you so hear, and all of us so remember, and  
 " so practice, that God's Holy Name may be glorified, and we all built up in the  
 " Knowledge of the Truth, which is according unto Godliness, we beseech God the  
 " Father,



“ Father, in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, to give us the Assistance of his Holy Spirit.]

“ [And in these, and all other our Supplications] let us always remember to pray for Christ’s Holy Catholick Church, *i. e.* for the whole Congregation of Christian People, dispersed throughout the whole World: [That it would please Almighty God to purge out of it all *Schism*, *Error*, and *Heresy*, and to unite all Christians in one holy Bond of Faith and Charity; that so at length the happy Day may dawn upon us, in which all that do confess his holy Name, may agree in the Truth of his holy Word, and live in Unity and godly Love.] More especially let us pray for the Churches of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, [that the God of Peace, who maketh Men to be of one Mind in a House, would make us all of one Soul and of one Spirit, that again we may meet together and praise him with one Heart and Mouth, and worship him with one accord, in the Beauty of Holiness.] To this end I am to require you most especially to pray for the King’s most Excellent Majesty, our Sovereign Lord *Charles*, by the Grace of God, King of *England*, *Scotland*, *France*, and *Ireland*, Defender of the Faith, and Supreme Governor in these his Realms, and in all other his Dominions and Countries, over all Persons, in all Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Temporal; [that God would establish his Throne in Righteousness, and his Seed to all Generations.] Also for our Gracious Lady *Mary*, the *Queen Mother*; for the most illustrious Prince *James*, *Duke of York*, and for the whole Royal Family, [that God would take them all into his Care, and make them the Instruments of his Glory, and the Good and Welfare of these Nations.] Farther, let us pray for the Ministers of God’s holy Word and Sacraments, as well Archbishops and Bishops as other Pastors and Curates; for the Lords, and others of his Majesty’s most Honourable Council, and for all the Nobility and Magistrates of the Realm; that all and every of these, in their several Callings, may serve truly and painfully to the Glory of God, and the edifying and well governing of his People, remembering the Account that they must make. [Let us also pray for the *Universities* of this Land, *Cambridge* and *Oxford*, that God would water them with his Grace, and still continue them the Nurseries of Religion and Learning to the whole Land.] Let us pray for the whole Commons of this Realm; [that remembering at last from whence they are fallen, they may repent, and do the first Works,] living henceforth in Faith and Fear of God, in humble Obedience to their King, and in brotherly Charity one to another. Finally, let us praise God for all those that are already departed out of this Life, in the Faith of Christ; and pray unto God we may have Grace to direct our Lives after their good Examples; that this Life ended, we may be made Partakers with them of the glorious Resurrection, in the Life everlasting. For which, and for all other needful Blessings, let us say together the Prayer of our Lord, who hath taught us to say,---  
“ *Our Father*, &c.

This is the Prayer of *William Sancroft*, B. D. *Decem. 2. 1660*, before his Sermon preached at the *Consecration* of seven Bishops, of which Bishop *Cozens* was one, whose *Chaplain* he then was: He afterwards became *Dean of St. Paul’s*, and Archbishop of *Canterbury*; but I did not think his Authority would ever be brought, in favour of *Bidding Prayer*; for as you see, he does not adhere to the *Letter* of the *Canon*, nor use the Words, *Pray ye*, or, *You shall pray*, but roundly turns the *Canon* into a *Prayer*, and then, with good Sense and Propriety, he moves the People (as the *Canon* bids him) to join with him in praying for, &c. And tho’ he once says,---*I am to require you, most especially, to pray for the King’s most excellent Majesty*,---yet having made himself a Party *before* in every single Petition, as well as in all that follows, ’tis plain that he also effectually joins in praying for the King, in most especial Manner;



Manner; and no Man can think otherwise of him, than that he prays himself for the King, as well as desires the People to do so, if he will consider the whole together. Let but the Minister use the *first Person plural*, at the beginning of his Prayer, and move the People to pray with him, and tho' he should afterwards slip into *Ye shall*, it will be taken for granted that he joins in Prayer with the Congregation, and they with him.

Another thing observable in Archbishop *Sancroft* is, that altho' he takes in almost every Word of the *Canon* into his Prayer, yet he adds very near as much more of his own composing to it, (which I have distinguished by this [ ] Mark) and yet I do not believe he has offended one Jot against the *Canon* in so doing, that Rule especially,---*As briefly as conveniently they may*,--- for I do not find a Word impertinent therein. But it is no great Matter what I think; I will leave it to you, or any indifferent Person else, to judge whether the Preacher himself believed he offended against the LV<sup>th</sup> *Canon*, in making this Prayer before his Sermon. You may be confident he had the *Canon* before his Eyes, for he transcribes it almost every Word. You are sure in the next Place, that he turns it into a Prayer; and as to the *Form*, he copies exactly from the *Canon*, he insists upon every Head mentioned therein according to the Order and Method there set down, for *the Catholick Church, the Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland, for the King as Supreme, the Royal Family, the Clergy, Nobility, Magistracy, and Commonalty of the Realm, &c.* And lastly, he does it *with all convenient Brevity*; his Words are pertinent, significant, and few. He has, in short, observed the three Rules mentioned in the *Preface*, as exactly as any Man could wish, *i. e.* (1.) To pray: (2.) To pray in the like Form with that prescribed: And (3.) To pray with a reasonable Conciseness. And he who carefully observes these three Rules, in making his Prayer before Sermon, shall certainly hit the Mind and Purpose of those who made the *Canon*; for if they had not intended a *Prayer*, what needed the Title to be, --- *The Form of a Prayer*? Why did they bid the Minister move the People to join with him in *Prayer*? And if they indeed intended *this Form*, and no other, why did they add,---*or to this Effect*,---*in hunc aut similem Modum, after this or the like Manner*? And lastly, if they intended the very Words of the *Canon*, and no other, to be used, how absurd was it to add,---*as briefly as conveniently they may, Summariâ (quantum licet) brevitate*? For an unalterable Number can neither be *more* nor *less* than it now is; nor a Form of Prayer, from which Men must not vary, be either *longer* or *shorter* than is set down; as is before observed.

Another Objection is, that if any Liberty be allowed to vary from the Words of the *Canon*, the Men of Vanity, Conceitedness, and Indiscretion, of warm Heads, and voluble Tongues, will run into all Extravagance, make lamentable Work of it, and vent the Folly that comes uppermost, without Controul. The Answer to this is, that there is no Help for it; no Caution is sufficient to guard against all Inconveniences. The *Canon* does allow some Liberty, and discreet Men will use it well, and the indiscreet will certainly abuse it; and the same Objection lies against *Preaching*, as well as *Praying*; and no Limitations or Restraints can possibly prevent a vain and indiscreet Preacher, from venting vain, false, and indiscreet Matter, let the Rules prescribed to him be never so good and reasonable. Let a Man (as I said above) but carefully observe the Rules prescribed him in the *Canon*, in composing his Prayer before Sermon, and there will be no place for this Objection: 'Tis the Neglect of these Rules that occasions all the Mischiefs that proceed from the Abuse of Pulpit-Prayers. Of this I will give you a Proof beyond Exception, and it is, --- *The Prayer for the whole State of Christ's Church militant here on Earth*; which is, in good Truth, but the Substance of the *Canon* turned into a *Prayer*, by a most discreet and careful Hand; and if the King's Title of *Supreme Head* had been added to his Name, in this Ad-



dress to God, it had not been at all improper, nor made it less a Prayer than it now is. And if the Wisdom of our Governors had appointed this for the Form of Prayer before Sermons, I wonder who would have been displeased, or would have exchanged it for an Injunction to *Bid Prayers*. But since it is ordered otherwise, the next thing most desirable is, that a Prayer, as near to this as the Words of the *Canon* will admit, should be composed, or that the Words, *Ye shall*, should be changed into the more comprehensive ones, and much more proper ones, *Let us pray*.

The last Objection is, that if the *Convocation* in 1603 had intended a formal Prayer before Sermon, they could and would have ordered it so, and not have worded the *Canon* as they have done, to leave it under any Doubt. The Answer to this is,--- That the Preachers had been accustom'd to this Way of *Bidding Prayers*, between sixty and seventy Years, by the *Injunctions* of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth, and the Injunction of the last had been in use for forty-four Years; and 'tis very probable that every single Man in the *Convocation* there present, had either used that Form of Words, or made a Prayer of them with little Variation; and therefore 'tis no Wonder that they readily took in the *Injunction*, and turned it into a *Canon*, without any great Alteration, and without much Consideration (in my Opinion) how consistent it would be with the *Title* and the *Preface* which they intended to put, and did actually put to it. The *Title* to King Edward's *Injunction* was,---*The Form of Bidding the Common Prayers*, i. e. the Prayers which the People were to make,-----*You shall pray for*, &c. And this *Title* was very proper, for the Preacher did bid the People pray, and told them for *whom* and *what* they were to pray. So was the *Title* to Queen Elizabeth's *Injunction*,---*The Form of Bidding the Prayers to be used generally in this uniform Sort*: And this was also very proper and suitable to what followed, *Ye shall pray for*, &c. And if the *Convocation* in 1603 had made use of, and preserved the same *Title*, as they made use of the same *Injunction of Elizabeth*, almost Word for Word, there would have been no more Doubt how the *Canon* was to be complied with, than there was about the *Injunction*. But when the *Convocation* fixes a very solemn *Title* to the *Canon*,-----*The Form of a Prayer to be used by Preachers before their Sermons*,----- Who that reads no farther, would not expect a Prayer should follow? And who that reads the *Title* in Latin,-----*Precationis Formula a Concionatoribus, in Concionum suarum Ingressu, imitanda*, would not expect to find a Form of Prayer set down, which the Preacher must use, or make one like it? And who can read the *Preface* of the *Canon*, either in *Latin* or *English*, who does not naturally expect the Minister himself should use some Form of Prayer, in which he is to move the People to *join with him*? To reconcile the *Canon* therefore with its *Title* and its *Preface*, there ought to be a Prayer, in which the Minister is to be included and concerned, and in this Prayer he is to pray for the Particulars mention'd in the *Canon* with their proper *Titles*; and this is to be done with all convenient Brevity; and in this Prayer the People are to be moved to join, and go along with him, in their Minds: And lastly, this Prayer is to be concluded and shut up with the *Lord's Prayer*. Now the shortest and most unexceptionable Way of doing this, is, by turning the *Canon* into a Prayer, by saying, *Let us pray*, instead of, *Ye shall pray*, which is what I advise you to do; tho' I dare say, you see the *Canon* gives you much more Liberty, if there be any Sense in either its *Title* or its *Preface*, as you will certainly conclude there ought to be, when you remember who they were that made them. And indeed, I am so reasonably assured of this Liberty, that were you not just now entering upon the Ministry, and consequently not accustomed to any Form of your own composing, or of any other's, I should have left you free, to have taken what Course you should have thought best, provided you had observed the Rules prescribed in the *Canon*, with respect to the *Persons*, *Titles*, and the *Time*, against which I think your  
good



good Sense would have kept you from offending. But, it may be, I shall not be thought to have answered this last Objection thoroughly, without considering what was done in the *Convocation*, in 1640, as it is represented by Dr. *Heylin*, in the Life of Archbishop *Laud*, p. 442.

“ Many had taken Exception against the tying up of Preachers to the Form of Prayer, appointed to be used before their Sermons, *Canon LV*; for whose Relief therein, a short Prayer was drawn, containing all the Heads of that in the Canon; and being so drawn up, it was to have been tendred by the Hands of one of the Clergy, who would have undertaken, that it should be universally receiv'd by all those which disliked the others: But the Archbishop chose rather to adhere to the *Canon*, than venture on any new Experiment; that *Canon* being founded on the Injunctions of Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *Edward VI*, at the first *Reformation*; and so the Imposition fell, without meeting farther.

This (saith old Dr. *Richard Sherlock*) evinceth sufficiently the said Canon to be no Prayer; nor yet lawfully to be altered and used Prayer-wise. That the Canon is not, as it stands worded, itself a Prayer, is evinced sufficiently from the *Convocation's* ordering a Prayer to be made out of it, comprizing all the Heads of the Canon, in short: But, that such a Prayer as this (supposing it well made) might not lawfully be used by the Preacher before his Sermon, is by no means sufficiently evinced from the Archbishop's chusing rather to adhere to the Canon, than to venture on any new Experiment; nor is the letting fall this Proposition, to be look'd upon as a Determination of the Clergy in the Case of Pulpit-Prayer. Whoever considers the troublesome Times, the evil Disposition of People's Minds, and the sad Circumstances with which the Archbishop was then surrounded, will see more Cause to wonder that he ventur'd upon any thing, in *Convocation*, than that he did no more. He made too many new Experiments in that unfortunate Assembly, by every one he made; and had he made a Hundred more, not one of them would have been well taken at his Hands, he was at that Time so unpopular. I know not that a Prayer from Heaven would, in that national religious Frenzy, have gone down with our distemper'd Lecturers and People, or would not have been thought a *Stinting of the Spirit*. And indeed, the prescribing a certain Form of Prayer to be used by all Preachers before their Sermons, is undoubtedly a stricter Limitation and Restriction, than the Canon itself is; for in the Prayer, the very Words to be used are prescribed; whereas the Canon, as Dr. *Heylin* himself observes, leaves Men at liberty to use *their own Words*; ---It was not, he says, p. 152. *the Church's purpose to bind her Ministers precisely to the Words which are there (i. e. in the Canon) laid down, but that in that very Form of Words, or other Words to that Effect, they &c.* The Refusal therefore of the Archbishop to admit the Canon thus turned into a Prayer, at this time, is, in my Opinion, a Proof of nothing, but that he thought it was *unseasonable*. He might moreover find some Fault in the Composition, and think it was not well altered: He might dislike the Parties employ'd in it: He might think it better to leave People to use their own Discretion, than to confine them to another's Words. He might, in short, have several Reasons to reject the Form offered, of which we know nothing, without once thinking that it was unlawful to alter the Words of the Canon, or to turn it into a Prayer: Nor can any one form a reasonable Judgment from hence, that the Clergy thought a Pulpit-Prayer unlawful, or not fit to be used, because this Proposal of turning the Canon into a Prayer, did not succeed in the *Convocation*. They must be great Strangers to the Methods of proceeding in *Convocation*, that conclude what the general Judgment of those *Bodies* is, from the Miscarriage of this or that Order, Motion, or Resolution made by them. It happens, I doubt, in these Assemblies, as it does in all others, equally numerous, that Chance and Humour make as many



many Determinations for and against, as either Reason or Judgment does. In 1640, the Archbishop did not like the Canon when turned into a Prayer, though other People did; and so the Proposal fell: But in 1661, the Proposal was again reviv'd, and for ought appears, was readily receiv'd; but yet we find no Issue of it. You shall have the Observation, as it stands in the First Volume of my Lord Bishop of Lincoln's most excellent and useful *Codex Juris Eccles.* p. 381.

" In the Year 1661, is this Entry in the Journal of the Upper-House of Convocation; \* *Reverendi Patres unanimi Consensu & Assensu in votis dederunt, pro unica Forma Precum tam ante quam post Sermonem, sive Orationem prædicatam, usitanda & observanda, per Ministros intra Provinciam Cant.* And that this Order was pursued in Convocation, (though not to Effect) appears from the Minutes of the Lower-House, where, Jan. 31, we find a Committee appointed for this (among other Purposes) to *compile a Prayer before Sermon.*

Here we see the Bishops unanimously vote for a stated Prayer *before* and *after* Sermons, and the Lower-House appoint a Committee to compile a Prayer before (leaving out *after*) Sermon; but nothing came of it; this Design, like a great many others, fell, without any Reason that we know of. The Debates that were held betwixt the Episcopal and Presbyterian Divines in the *Savoy*, were for and against private Persons taking Liberty to make private Prayers of their own, before and after Sermons; which a stated Prayer appointed by the *Convocation* would certainly have prevented, and answered all Objections: And how it came to miscarry I know not: I am only concerned under this Head, to affirm, that this Miscarriage ought not to be considered as a Determination of the Clergy, in favour of the Canon, or against a Pulpit-Prayer, since most of the Clergy here concerned did certainly use a Pulpit-Prayer, before their Sermons, of which I might give a great many Instances, if it were necessary; but I have hitherto kept within 1604, and 1660, except in the Case of Archbishop *Sancroft*, to which I was called, as above: And I would not have mentioned Bishop *Hacket*, tho' one that always used a Pulpit-Prayer, if it were not to correct a Mistake or two of Dr. *Plume* in his Life of that Bishop: " Bidding of Prayer before Sermon, he (*i. e.* Bishop *Hacket*) never used, and said, no more did Dr. *Ravis*, and Dr. *Fletcher*, Archbishop *Whitgift's* Chaplains, afterwards Bishops of *London*, who drew up the LV<sup>th</sup> Canon, whom he knew very well, and often heard preach, and always used a Form of their own.

That Dr. *Hacket* never practised *Bidding of Prayer*, may be very true; and it may be also true, that Dr. *Ravis* and Dr. *Fletcher* used a Form of their own; but it cannot be true that Dr. *Hacket* had often heard Dr. *Fletcher* pray, for he was but four Years old when Bishop *Fletcher* died, which was in 1596, and he was but seventeen when Bishop *Ravis* died, in 1609; but I dare say, that if he said he had heard so of both, he said true. Dr. *Ravis* might be in the *Convocation* in 1604, but *Fletcher* was dead long before that Time, and consequently could have no hand in turning the *Queen's Injunction* into a Canon, adding a *Preface* to it, and a *Title*, which occasions you and myself the Trouble of this long Answer to a short Question, which will, I think, not only give you full Satisfaction in the Point before you, but may also serve for a Defence (if it be wanted) of the Practice of the greatest part of the Clergy of the Church of *England*.

\* *Seff. IV. Dec. 9.*



A  
S E R M O N  
U P O N  
S W E A R I N G.

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Exod. Chap. XX. Ver. 7.

*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

**I**T were good, that you should often read the xix<sup>th</sup> Chapter of *Exodus*, to see with what a dreadful Solemnity the *Ten Commandments* were delivered by God to Moses from Mount Sinai. v. 16. *It came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp, to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoak, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoak thereof ascended as the smoak of a furnace; and the whole mount quaked greatly.* This was a Sight so terrible, that Moses himself said (*Heb. xii. 21.*) *I exceedingly fear and quake:* And for the People, they when they saw the Fire, the Blackness, Darknes, and the Tempest, and heard the Thunder, Trumpet, and the Voice of God ---- *removed and stood afar off, and said to Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* The Words which God spake, with this amazing dreadful Preparation, were the *Ten Commandments*. Do you therefore think these Words were Words to be neglected, or forgotten? I have repeated a few of these Passages, that what I am going to say may make the deeper Impression on your Minds.

The Words of the Text are part of that Divine Law, that God himself uttered, with all those awful Circumstances, before rehearsed: They make up, you know, the *Third Commandment*. Imagine therefore that you heard the Voice of God, proclaiming loud in all your Ears, from the midst of glorious and yet dreadful Fire and Smoak, Lightning, Thunder, and the Sound of Trumpets ----- *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain* ---- Imagine this, and see, if it is like to be so cheap a thing, in the Conclusion, to profane the sacred Name of God, by Oaths and Curfes, Blasphemies, and dreadful Execrations, as is the common Practice now-a-days to do, on every slight and frivolous Occasion.

To preserve those who are innocent, and to reclaim those who are guilty of this wicked Practice, I intend, in the first Place, to consider the Words of the Text, and next, to make use of such Reasons, and Arguments, as I think proper to dissuade from it.

*To take the name of God in vain*, is, in the first and literal Sense, to use the sacred Name of God lightly and commonly, to vain and idle Purposes, when it is needless and insignificant, although we do not swear by it, or call him to witness to the



Truth of what we say. To have that Name often in our Mouths, upon every little poor Occasion, is to make it cheap and despicable, and shews we have not that awful Respect for him in our Hearts, that we should have: This is the beginning of Evil, and generally prepares the way to Swearing: People do not fall to downright Oaths at first, but begin to wear off the Fear and Dread of Swearing, by the little Abuses and Profanations of the Name of God; and then they venture by degrees to swear by it. These Mischiefs come by Custom and Habit; and therefore you must take good heed at first, and stop your Children and young People, from using the Name of God familiarly and commonly, and upon all occasions; and that will beget a Reverence to it, and keep them from farther abusing it. Remember to check and punish them, if you hear them call on God, either at their Play, or Work, or on any occasion but what is serious and becoming; and by doing this constantly, you will stop up one of the commonest Inlets to this wicked Practice; you will make them careful of what they say, and do yourselves a great deal of good by it. Your doing your Duty to your Children and Servants in this Point, will put you in mind of your own Neglects and Failings; you will, in time, be ashamed of reminding them of taking the Name of God in vain, when you yourselves are guilty of it, and have set them a bad Example. I wish that the frequent Practice of abusing the Name of God, in Parents and Masters and Mistresses, be not often the occasion of Children and Servants falling into the like; and often the Reason, why those Parents, Masters and Mistresses, will not, or dare not, reprove and punish their Children and Servants for so offending. And pray consider, what an evil pass those poor People are brought to, that dare not do their Duty to their Children and Servants, when yet they shall be punished sorely by God for not doing it. I would they would think better on this Matter; and though they are exceeding faulty in this Point themselves, yet they would still reprove and punish those who are under their Care for the like Offences; they would do but their Duty, prevent a great deal of Mischiefe, and save the being guilty of other People's Sins.

But to take the name of God in vain, is most properly, to Swear, either *rashly*, without just and weighty Occasions, without Heed and Reverence, or *falsely*, without regard to Truth, and to what our Conscience tells us; either without knowing what we say to be true, or knowing that what we say is *not* true.

First, of Swearing lightly or rashly, the Commandment is, *thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*. By which it should appear, that no Man can be said to Swear, that does not use the very Name of God in his Oath; this was an old Mistake, and yet continues very common amongst us, and therefore must needs be removed, before I can go any further; for People have still fancied, that if they do not mention the sacred Name of God, in their Affeverations, they are not to come under the Guilt of taking God's Name in vain, altho' they Swear by any Thing, or Creature, else. Our Saviour says, *Matth. xxiii. 16.* to the Scribes and Pharisees, --- *Woe to you, ye blind guides, which say---Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor, i. e. he is obliged to perform his Oath---Ye fools and blind; for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing, but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon the altar, he is guilty---i. e. guilty if he perform not that Oath: Ye fools and blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Who therefore (saith our Saviour, and which is the Solution of what I propose) shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And who shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that swears by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God,*  
and



and by him that sitteth thereon-----Add to this, what he says in *Matth. v. 34.* But I say unto you, swear not at all, i. e. in your common Conversation---- neither by heaven, for it is God's throne----neither by the earth, for it is his footstool----neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King----neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. Add, I say, this to what is before said, and you will find, that the Relation every thing and Creature in the World has to the great Creator of them all, is so close and dependent, that it is assigned as the Cause, why he who sweareth by the one, should be concluded to swear by the other. He who swears by the Altar, Offering, or the Temple, swears by him to whom that Altar is erected, to whom that Offering is offered, and to whom that Temple with its Service is devoted---i. e. to God. He who swears by Heaven, swears by him who governs therein; he who sweareth by the Earth, swears by him whose Footstool it is, and who made and preserves it. He who swears by *Jerusalem*, swears by him whose City it was, i. e. by the great God. He who swears by his Head, which is as it were the Fountain of Life, swears by him who made that Head, and in whose Hands alone is the Power of Life and Death. This is a Demonstration (in its kind) that People may swear, without using the Name of God; and consequently may offend against this Commandment, without taking the Name of the Lord their God in vain, in the literal Sense. And therefore, pray remember, that you satisfy not yourselves with any such idle Distinction; nor think you do not swear, when you do not pronounce the sacred Name of God, tho' you swear by any thing else.

I do not say, however, that it is not better to swear by any thing that does not immediately relate to God, than by his sacred *Name*, his precious *Blood*, and meritorious *Wounds*, and *Passion*; because it creates less Horror, gives less Offence, and is not of so bad Example: There is great difference of Oaths; all are bad, but some are much worse than others, and look as if they were more studied, and deliberately wicked, and as if they came from Hell.

When I have convinced you of this, that the Guilt of taking God's Name in vain, may be contracted by swearing by any thing else that has relation to God, tho' his Name be not directly used, then you will see, that you must no more swear by any thing else, than by the Name of God; and therefore that all sorts of Oaths are comprehended under the third Commandment, and concluded under these Words---*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* Which Words contain, as I said, a Prohibition of all light and rash Oaths, in our common Conversation, as well as all false Oaths, whether in private Company, or in publick Courts of Judicature, and before the Magistrate. I will only now speak of all light and rash Oaths, whether true or false, whether mischievous or idle. For the Name of God is despised and profaned, by our using it upon light and frivolous Occasions, tho' what we swear be never so true; because the thing was not worthy of so much weight, as an Oath does usually add to what is said. Now that no one is to swear in light and trivial Matters, will appear to you very plainly, when you consider what an Oath is.

An Oath is a most religious thing, 'tis an Acknowledgment of God's Omniscience, and Omnipotence; we declare thereby, that we believe that he knows the very Secrets of our Hearts, and that he can and will punish us, if what we affirm be not true, and if we purpose not to perform what we then promise. An Oath is the solemn calling upon God, to bear witness, that what we utter with our Mouths, is what we believe in our Hearts to be exactly true; and it is also the solemn calling upon God, to punish, and take vengeance on us, if we do not seriously intend what we say and promise. The Heart of Man lies secret to all the World; you want to know whether I speak the Truth, and whether I intend to do as I say I will do. My bare Word is not sufficient in the Case, because all Men are, or may be Liars;  
and



and tho' their Words may be with you, yet their Hearts may be far from you. How will you do then, to know whether I be a true Man, and speak what I think? Why then, I take an Oath, I swear by the sacred Name of God, that what I affirm with my Lips, is what my Heart believes to be true; by this I call God to witness that my Heart and Mouth agree, and that if they do not agree, then I am understood to desire that God would take Vengeance on me, and punish my Impiety to *him*, and Falseness to *Man*. Can any thing then be more serious and religious than a solemn Oath? Assure yourselves, that every time you take an Oath, let it be by what it will, that has relation to God, you do at that time call down the great God to witness to the Truth of what you say, and to avenge himself on your Falseness, if what you say be indeed false.

Remember therefore, I desire you, what a serious thing an Oath is; and then think, whether it be fit to apply so serious a thing, to such light and frivolous Occasions, as Men commonly swear upon, though what they swear to should be true. Let this be the *first* Reason, against swearing lightly, and foolishly, in trivial Things. It is an awful thing, to call upon the great God of Heaven and Earth, the Maker and Preserver of us all, upon whose Will alone we depend for every Moment of our Lives; to call *him* to attest and witness, to matters of so small and pitiful Concern, that you would be ashamed to call even *me*, or any serious Neighbour to be witness to. This ought not to be done, in Decency, though what you swear to, be never so true. An Oath is to make an end of Strife, and for Confirmation of Truth; but then this Truth is to be a Truth of Weight and great Importance; and this Strife is to be of matters worth the striving for. Every Oath that is allowed to be taken, by God, is to be taken, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* says, *iv. 2. in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness*; with the Heart, with the Understanding, and a good Conscience; and to discover the Truth, that Judgment may be righteously administered, and good may be done by it. The Name of God is not to be sworn by, where none of these good Ends are answered. I wish you could but remember all the Oaths you have heretofore sworn, that you might examine and see, how few were sworn in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousness; how few tended to discover any Truth of Importance, that wanted to be discovered; how few of them contributed to the doing Justice to any one, or to the promoting Righteousness. I am afraid you would find, that every Oath, besides what you took before the Magistrate, was taken vainly, lightly, rashly, presumptuously, and wickedly; so far from doing any good, that they are, every one of them, matter of Shame, Humiliation and Repentance before God.

Remember *2dly*, that all these light, rash, and presumptuous Oaths are not only unbecoming and unfit to be uttered, by reason of their unworthy Matter, but are most solemnly forbidden by God. 'Tis God himself, you see, that says, to every one of us----*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*-----Would God himself descend from Heaven, with such Solemnity, as you have seen, to forbid you the taking his Name in vain, if it were not a Matter of the greatest Moment and Importance in the World to you, not to take that Name in vain? 'Tis for your sake alone, for your Advantage, here and hereafter, that God instructs you in his Will, and tells you what you are to do, and what to leave undone, in order to his blessing, favouring you, and making you happy.

If you should spend every Day you live in Oaths and Curses, Execrations, Blasphemies, and Profanations of God's holy Name and Word, you would not interrupt his Happiness, or do him any harm at all: But because it will hurt yourselves, and bring



bring you to everlasting Destruction both of Body and Soul, not to do his Will, and to comply with his Injunctions and Commands, therefore

Remember 3dly, That these Oaths will be avenged by God, some time or other. -----*The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.* He who from Heaven forbids us, every one, to take his Name in vain, declares, from Fire and Smoak, with Thunder, Lightning, Storm and Tempest, that *he will not hold us guiltless that take his name in vain*; and if not guiltless, then to be sure we shall be held guilty; guilty of the Violation and Breach of God's Law, and consequently liable to such Punishment as is due to such Offenders and Offences. What particular Punishments they are obnoxious to, in this Life, is not declared; and therefore they are liable to all; there is not a Judgment, in all the Stores of God's Vengeance, but they have reason to apprehend and fear, their Sin is so provoking, and presumptuous, and has so little Temptation to it. *Because of swearing the land mourneth*, saith the Prophet *Jerem. xxiii. 10. i. e.* the Land was afflicted with several Plagues and heavy Judgments, by reason of the Frequency of Oaths and Perjuries among the People. And I dare say, that many a Man, amongst us, is afflicted, blasted, and undone, by this audacious Contempt of God's Name, and Prophanation, who little thinks from whence the Curse and secret Canker comes. How should it be otherwise? Can God be *presumed* to bless, can he be *intreated* to bless, those People, who daily take his Name in vain, who defie his Laws, and curse him to his Face? who call for Vengeance on their own, and other People's Heads, almost every Word they say? Can they expect a Blessing, who hardly ever mention God, but in the way of Blasphemy? and make few other Prayers, than for Plagues and Mischiefs, and Damnation, and eternal Wrath? How merciful is God, that he does not grant what these poor People ask him, with such Earnestness?

But be assured, that without sincere Repentance, and Amendment of this Sin, however he forbear you in this World, he will most certainly, according to your Curses and repeated Wishes, condemn you, and confound you, in the World to come. Those Prayers that came from Hell, which pleased your Ears, and filled your Mouth so often, shall once be heard, and carry you to that accursed Place of Pain and Sorrow, and to that Company of cursed Spirits, which you have called upon so often. Remember, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God; who has declared, *he will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain.*

Remember 4thly, That as oft as you come to Church, on these Occasions, so oft you solemnly pray to God, that you may escape this great Guilt. No sooner has the Minister proclaimed in the Name of God, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*, but the People, every one of them, is commanded to answer-----*Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep thy Law.* And can you go from hence, and unbespeak this Prayer immediately, by falling again into that wicked Practice? Without the Grace of God, we can do nothing that is good, nor escape the falling into any Evil: We therefore hear this Law of God pronounced, against taking his Name in vain; we hear the Transgression of this Law severely threatned, *he will not hold us guiltless*-----we pray him to have mercy on us, to forgive us all our great and frequent Violations of this Law, that are past; and we intreat him, of his Mercy also, to incline our Hearts, for the future, to keep this Law; that he would fill them with such an awful Reverence and Regard to his great Name, that we may never do it any Violence or Dishonour, by swearing idly, rashly, or falsely; and there is all the reason in the World, to pray this Prayer most seriously and earnestly, because 'tis decent, reasonable, and a thing of such Moment, as even our Lives and Souls depend upon it.



it. Now put these things together, that have already been laid down---That an Oath is a most sacred, serious, solemn Act of Religion, intended by God for the Confirmation of Truth, the doing Justice and Judgment to all Men, and the putting an end to Strife-----That it is a most unseemly, unbecoming thing, to apply such serious and religious Affirmations, as Oaths are, to light and trivial Words, and matters of no Weight and Moment----That all such Oaths are utterly forbidden by God's express Command, uttered by his own Mouth; that the Breach of this Command will surely be avenged by him, as sure as God is true, who has said it-----And that we make it our constant Prayer, that we may not fall into this Sin, but may incline with all our Hearts to keep this Law----Put all these things together, and see if light and common Swearing be a thing that Men should so cheaply and easily fall into; if it be not what we ought immediately to be humbled for, to be sadly ashamed of, to be most seriously repented of and left. These are all religious Considerations, and concern us, as People that pretend to believe in God, that acknowledge the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and profess and call ourselves Christians.

There is no such thing as answering any of these Arguments; no body once pretends to justify their Practice of Swearing, either from Scripture, Reason, or Authority of wise and good Men: The Practice indeed runs against all, and is too much for all of them, in this World; and no body ever yet defended it: Is it not strange, that what is so impossible to be excused or justified, should yet obtain so generally? That that which every one condemns, both in himself, and in all other People, should yet be patiently suffered to prevail, and reign, as it were, without Controul?

If these religious Considerations will not prevail, that yet convince the Conscience of every single Man and Woman in the World----there is but little Hope, that other Reasons of less Weight and Moment, should do any great Service, to the discountenancing and abating of this wicked Practice. But yet it will become us to try all Ways and Means to do it.

Add therefore, in the 5th Place, That the Laws of the Land take Cognizance of this Matter, and make it Penal *to take the name of God in vain*. It is a sort of Reproach to any Christian People, to think that when neither the Fear of offending God, and incurring his Displeasure, and being punished by him, can restrain Men from Swearing, the Penalty of *Two Shillings* should do it: That Men should rather fear the paying a little Money, than fear the offending him, who can cast both Soul and Body into Hell Fire. This, I say, is a sort of shameful Consideration; but we must take things as we find them, and be very glad if the Fear of any thing will keep Men in their Bounds, and preserve them in any Degree innocent. Remember, therefore, that whoever swears in common Conversation, is liable to the Forfeiture, if complained of; and that you lie at the Mercy of every one that will inform against you. I wish this Law would take better effect, than it has hitherto done; and that you would keep one another in awe, by the Power it gives you, to put them to Expence and Shame, that are guilty of Swearing. The Name of an Informer is, in some Cases, odious, but in this Case it is not so; here a Man gets nothing by it, because the Forfeiture goes to the Poor, which is so much good to them who want it: And it is done for a good End, that God may not be dishonoured, and that a sinful Practice in our Neighbour may not be suffered to go on, to his great Mischief. I should not be ashamed myself to turn Informer in this Case, if it should so fall out. But I had rather much, that the Fear of God, and the Sense of your Duty, should restrain you from doing Evil, than the Fear of such Information, and such Penalty. Make this use of the Law, however; consider, whether it be worth the while, to pay down the Wages of a Day or two's Labour, by which your Family should subsist, for the sake of Swearing an Oath,----if there were really no other Mischief

to



to follow. Especially when you remember, in the *Sixth Place*, that there is neither Pleasure nor Profit to be reaped from this ungodly Practice. They who are most addicted to Swearing, know not why they are so; they can give no Reason, why they fall continually into this abominable Sin; they freely acknowledge, that they neither *propose*, nor *find*, any Pleasure, or Advantage in it. Other Sins have one or both of these Temptations, to induce Men to fall; they either satisfy some sensual Appetite, or gratify some covetous Desire of Profit; at least they hope to find their Account in it. But he who swears, thinks of neither: So that he truly gives away his Soul for nothing. Other Sinners *sell* them at least, but this Man squanders his away for that which neither pleases him, nor does him any Service. Of all Offenders in the World, the common Swearer makes the worst Bargain, gives himself up to everlasting Pains and Sorrows, for that which no body advised him to, no body tempted him to, no body approved when done; which he himself never liked whilst doing, nor ever remembred when done, with any Satisfaction or Content. Let any one call to mind the many Oaths, and Profanations of God's Holy Name, he has been guilty of, and see what he has gotten by them, whether he be the richer, the wiser, or more esteemed, or any ways bettered by them: And will you keep a Practice still, that never did, nor ever will, bring either Pleasure or Advantage with it? *What shall it profit a man, indeed, to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* But is it not still so much the worse, to lose his Soul, and gain nothing? The sensual Pleasures of this Life may bring one to eternal Pain; but yet it is foolisher, to endure those Pains, for Sins that have no Pleasure in them. In all Offences else, we consider what Men aim at and intend, what their End and Drift is; and what the Motives and Temptations to them are; and accordingly we excuse them more or less; but in this we see no End, no Temptation, and they themselves say so; they are therefore self-condemned, and condemned by every body else. What shall I say further? 'Tis a Practice that you hate and abhor, in all People whom you love, as in your Wives and Children; and a Practice you cannot well endure in your Servants, and such as are related to you. You would, I imagine, stand amazed, be angry, and ashamed, to hear your Wives and Children answer you with Oaths, swear loudly upon all Occasions, and mingle Blasphemies and Curses in their common Discourses. They have the same Passions, the same Provocations to this Sin, with yourselves; you are no more allowed by the Laws of God, or Man, than they; 'tis only Custom makes the difference. Their Modesty and Virtue has not yet broken through the Restraints of Religion and God's Laws, and I hope they never will: but if they should, they have as much to say before God as yourselves; no Sex, Age or Degree, can pretend to a Privilege of offending God. But I would gladly hope 'tis Love to those Relations, that would give you both Grief and Shame, to hear them fall into this wicked Practice; imagine therefore, since they love you also equally, that those Relations are alike ashamed and grieved to see you fall so easily and frequently into that wicked Practice; and for their sake, as well as for your own, forbear it. Think with yourself, that as *you* fell into this Sin, by Example, and hearing others swear, by Habit, and by Custom, so may your Wife and Children (without the Grace of God, and great Care) be brought, by your Example, and living daily in your Company, to the same shameful, wicked Custom: And then, what a Heap of Sin and Mischief do you draw upon your Head; by occasioning those to fall, whom above all the World you were obliged to keep upright? by drawing down God's Vengeance on their Heads, whose Innocence and Prayers might have prevailed with him, to spare you, and restore you to his Favour. 'Tis certain indeed, that neither Wife, nor Children, will be excused before God, for following the wicked Example of a Husband and a Father; because every body is to live by Rule and God's Law, and not by any one's Example: but 'tis as certain, that he shall be punished by God, for giving



giving such an ill Example to Wife and Children, who are so apt and easy to follow it. I would not easily suppose, that Women frequently fall into this accursed Custom; but I say, if they do, the Men are very much to blame for it, by setting them so ill an Example, and giving them such Countenance and Encouragement. And then, what a sort of a Hell is there in such a House, where every one despises God, and tramples under foot his Laws, and no body is left, to stand amazed, to reprove, to grieve, and to intercede with God, for his Mercy and Forbearance to that sinful and lost Family. These are the properest Arguments that I could think on, to dissuade you by, from light and rash Swearing; they are such as you have often heard, such as your own Sense and Reason may and does suggest and furnish you with, against your daily Practice: Your Condemnation will chiefly arise from hence, that you in your own Hearts and Consciences know all the Reasons and Arguments against swearing, and not one for it, as well as the greatest Scholars in the World; and therefore want not to be instructed in your Duty by us, but to be remembered and put in mind of what you knew before.

Let me therefore make an end, at this time, with reminding you of some few things, and laying some few Injunctions on you. Let every one, that has been guilty of this dangerous and wicked Practice, repent sincerely of it, ask God Forgiveness with his whole Heart, and beg the Assistance of his Grace, to keep him, and prevent his falling again into it. And let him also use his best Endeavours himself, to avoid all manner of occasions, that hitherto have led him to it. Let him carefully watch over himself, that he speak not hastily and unadvisedly with his Lips. Remember God is in the Company, and hears you every Word you say. Give not way to Anger upon every little Accident, that crosses your Design; this is the Parent of many Oaths; the least thing that is out of the way, and does not do as you would have it, the least Opposition of your Judgment, the least Contradiction to your Will, provokes you to call on God, to curse, and blaspheme his Name; as if that would any way mend the matter, or make things go the better. You must, if given to Swearing, above all things, avoid Drinking, and Gaming: If the Fear of God depart from you, when you are sober, serious, and have your Senses about you, and you can hardly *then* forbear Swearing; how should you do it, when you have lost that Reason, and are little less than mad? Even they who abhor an Oath when sober, do yet outrageously swear when they are overcome with Drink; you must therefore, by all means, avoid Excess, that does so naturally and easily provoke to Passion. And as to *Gaming*, there are few People in the World that follow it, but swear excessively; there are few that lose their Money, but lose their Patience and their Temper with it; and the little cross Accidents that commonly happen, overthrow all Reason, and leave the Man to the Rage of his wild Passions, and then you know what follows. Gaming is one of the most destructive Vices Men can fall into, and provokes to the greatest Anger. It undoes most People at long-run; and 'tis much worse in mean and poor People, than in the Rich, because it wastes their Time excessively, which poor People can very ill spare, from the Care and Labours that are to support themselves and poor Families; and it wastes their small Substance, that should furnish their Wives and Children with Bread and other Necessaries of Life. But that which I intend against it now is, that it occasions Oaths and Curses, Blasphemies and dreadful Execrations, in a most fearful Manner; and therefore, whoever would avoid Swearing and taking the Name of God in vain, must be sure to avoid Gaming, though it be for little matters. Avoid also all such Company, as are likeliest to minister occasion to Anger and Opposition. Some People are of so perverse and thwarting a Temper, that a Man had need of Patience to converse quietly with them; they that are apt to be provoked, must shun this Company. And when you have taken this care of yourself,

to



to prevent your falling into this wicked Practice ----- go on to promote the Glory of God, by doing good to others-----If your Neighbours are apt to swear, tell them, calmly, they distrust you too much, and that you would believe them without an Oath, they have such Credit with you. When once they find you deal thus Christianly and friendly with them, they will be more upon their guard in your Company; and so you will be instrumental to their Good, and make some amends for your own Miscarriages. But for those who are more immediately under your Care, and depend upon you, there you may be more free, and there it is your Duty to reprove, and punish such as you find guilty of this way of dishonouring God. Let not any of your Children dare to swear, without your Anger and immediate Chastisement. You will save them hereby, from much Mischief here, and from God's Anger hereafter. Keep not a Servant under your Roof, that is guilty of this wicked Practice, their Labours will not be blessed by God to you. Employ no Workmen that will not do their Business without swearing. Relieve no Poor that are guilty of thus dishonouring God. You would, in a little time, see a great Change and Reformation of Manners, if you would take these Courses: They ought to want even Necessaries, that will not work for them, and enjoy them with the Favour of God; they would in a little time be very thankful to you, and bless God for you, that by those means reclaimed them from those cursed Habits. This was heretofore the Sin of the Rich, the Easy, and the thoughtless great Men of the World; but now, the poorer People are, the wickeder, and more provoking God; they will not let the Rich and Great have any Sins peculiar to them, but will come in for their share, tho' it be but a share of Damnation.

Is it not a strange and amazing thing, to hear poor People swearing at the Plow, and at their daily Labour, swearing at their Horses, Cattle, and any thing that comes in their Way? People that depend on the Blessing of God, for their daily Bread, are daily provoking him, to blast and confound them. Ought not these People to be taught by Punishments, and all sorts of Penalties and Rigors, to be more sensible of their Duty, and to pay more Honour to their constant Heavenly Benefactor? Shall it be cheaper still to despise their Maker, and despise their good Redeemer, than to speak a disrespectful Word of their Superiors, Parents, or their Masters? Compassion to the Poor would make one partial in their Favour, and much more tender of afflicting them than others; but this is true Compassion, to afflict them for a while, that they may learn not to blaspheme, and be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus. Let no Man therefore be tenderer of *them*, than of God's Honour, nor by sparing their Bodies, hurt their Souls. If they will venture to offend God, let them be sure to provoke the Justice and Indignation of Men, and pay whatever Penalty the Law inflicts; that if they will not obey for *Conscience* sake, they may for *Wrath*, that the Name of God be not blasphemed.

But let me rather end, with hoping, desiring, and with praying, that the Sense of God's Honour, the Sense of his Command, the Sense of their Duty, and their great Danger, may influence them to Consideration, Repentance, and Amendment, more than the Fear of Man; and that, by all, or any means, they may be evermore restrained from taking the Name of the Lord their God in vain; and may for evermore remember, *that he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*



A  
C H A R G E

DELIVERED TO THE

C L E R G Y

OF THE

D I O C E S E of E L Y.

In A U G U S T, 1722.

T H E

P R E F A C E.

**W**HEN I had well considered, and put together, what I thought most proper and most useful to deliver to the Clergy, at the approaching Visitation, I took a little Time to deliberate, whether it would be most for the Ease and common Benefit of us all, that I should read it myself, as is the usual Way, again and again, to the distinct Assemblies, in the several Places where we were to meet; or, whether I should send it, in this Manner, together with the Articles, to every single Clergyman concern'd, to read at home, before-hand, or when best at leisure.

And, having had the Experience of both Ways, I have fixed upon the latter, as the most convenient: And have rather chosen to spare my own Pains in Speaking, and your Patience in Hearing, than a little Expence, in sending this abroad, in the Manner I here do.

T H E



T H E  
C H A R G E.

**T**HERE is no Consideration can, I think, be more grievous and afflicting to the Mind of a truly honest and careful Minister of Christ, (let him be in what Station he will) than to find his Labours, Time, and Pains meet with such Entertainment, as is in no Degree answerable to the good Intentions with which he employed them, nor to the Hopes he reasonably conceived of their Success.

This, however, must not discourage me, nor any one of our Profession, from pursuing by the same, or any other honest Means that we can think on, the same good End we have, and always ought to have, namely, the Edification and Instruction of that Part of Christ's Church, which God, in his good Providence, hath charged us with. This is proper, and in some sort peculiar to our good Office, that we must never change our Aim and End, let the Event be what it will; but must go on, doing our best, and leave the Issue to God, in whose Hands alone it is. The Men of other Callings and Professions, may, if they find their Time and Pains lost, or ill spent, and that things do not answer their Expectation, either leave off entirely, or betake themselves to other Business. *Success* is to them of so great Consequence, that they have nothing else to look after; and if they find it not, after some reasonable Patience and Perseverance, they have nothing to do, but to desert that fruitless Undertaking, and look out for something more promising, and hopeful. But this is not our Case. Our Calling is of God, and never is to be forsaken; but that is not all, for we may keep our Calling and Profession, without answering the End of it. The End of our Institution and Appointment is, the bringing People to God, and keeping them in the Faith, and Obedience to Christ; by entering them into Covenant with God by Baptism; by instructing them in the Principles of their Religion; directing them in the Discharge of all their Duties; reminding them of their Omissions and Neglects; exhorting them to Stedfastness and Perseverance in Well-doing; and, in a Word, to do whatever we can, to bring our People to, and preserve them in, the Ways of Peace and Safety. This is the End of our Calling, this is the Reason of our being set apart and sanctified to God's Service; and this is the Promise and Profession that we make, when Ordained to any holy Function; and for this we have our different Recompences in this World; and shall, (but with more Certainty, more Equality, and Justice) have them also in the next, at the great Day of Retribution.

Now, as this is the End of our Institution, and these the Means instituted also of God, for the obtaining this good End, so we must never have this End out of our Sight, nor ever cease to use these instituted Means, let what will be the Issue. We are to preach, and pray, administer the Sacraments, and, upon all occasions, to discharge our several Duties to the People, in the best Manner that we can, tho' we should do them all in vain, or find but little Fruit of all our Labours. 'Tis a very discouraging thing indeed, to bestow one's Time, and Pains, and Study, and good Meaning, upon a hardened and unprofiting People. But, as we may be, (and I hope we often are) mistaken, in judging of the Success of our Labours in our Ministry; so, were we never so surely disappointed of our Expectations, yet must we persevere, and *in patience possess our souls*, and only have in view our Orders and Commands on Earth, and our Reward in Heaven. We have to deal with Creatures, that are, and must be free Agents, and therefore *whether they will hear, or whether they will*



*will forbear*, will not depend on us, but on themselves; and therefore if we do our Duty, their Deafness or Neglect, will never be imputed to us. Paul *may plant, and Apollos water, but 'tis God that giveth the increase*. He that planteth therefore, and he that watereth, will not be answerable for the Increase: The planting and the watering is their Business, and for the Neglect of that, they may and will be answerable. Nor is the Reward annexed or promised to their *Success*, but to their Labours, and *Endeavours to succeed*. *They who turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever*. But so will they, who equal them in Zeal, and Care, and Diligence, to turn to Righteousness, even those, who after all will not be turned. The Certainty therefore of pleasing our great Master, and of receiving the Reward, let what will be the Issue of all our Labours in the Lord, is to support us under all Discouragements whatever we may meet with, in discharging them; and is to balance that Concern and Grief that the good Husbandman can never fail of having, as often as he comes to the Trees he has long and carefully cultivated, and finds no Fruit thereon.

But after all, altho' we are not answerable for the Success and Issue of our Ministerial Labours, yet since we are answerable for our Fidelity, our Care, and Diligence, and our Discretion, in the Use and Management of all those Means that are appointed of God, or suggested by human Reason, Observation, and Experience, as fit and proper to attain that excellent End, which is to be (and is I hope) the Aim and Desire of all our Hearts, namely the Edification and Salvation of all our People; since we are answerable, I say, for all these Things, which are the Means by which (with the Grace of God) we must, if ever we do, succeed; we shall have little Joy in thinking of the Recompence, unless our Hearts be first assured, that we have done our best Endeavours to obtain it. What is it therefore, that can give us this Assurance, or good Hope, that we shall, one Day, hear that blessed *Euge*, from our Master's Mouth, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?* Why, nothing but the Conscience of our having been those good and faithful Servants, there mentioned. 'Tis not St. Paul alone can say, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day*; but every Minister of Christ besides, if he be able also to say, as he had said before, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*: All which Expressions refer to the good Discharge of the ministerial Office, to which he had been exhorting *Timothy* in the Verses before, and in this (2 Tim. iv. 7.) by his own Example. This is a Thing that we are much concern'd to think upon; so much, that if we thought on nothing else, we should not, at any time, repent of it. 'Tis now our Honour, and Advantage too, that we are the Stewards and Dispensers of God's Word and Sacraments: But the Time will come, no body knows how soon to some, but shortly to us all, when we shall be called to give an Account of this our Stewardship, to the great Master of us all: And happiest he, who shall be best prepared to do it! The readiest way to be so, will be, certainly, to recollect the Promises, the Engagements, and the Obligations, we laid ourselves under, when first we enter'd on our holy Office; and then to see how we fulfilled those Promises, acquitted ourselves of those Engagements, and how we have discharged those several Obligations. For, just according to the Answer that the Conscience makes to these Inquiries, are Men prepared to give an Account of their Stewardship, and no otherwise. I know not, therefore, how I shall more profitably spend the Time, allotted usually to these Occasions, than by considering plainly and distinctly, the several Engagements we have voluntarily brought upon ourselves, by entering into Holy Orders; that we may see, what matter of Joy we have, or what of Sorrow, Reparation, and Amendment: For, in this Stewardship, we have to deal



deal with so compassionate and good a Lord, that our Accounts will pass, not only with Mistakes of Ignorance and Negligence, but of Unfaithfulness and Fraud itself, if seriously acknowledged and repented of, and if redeemed by After-Care and Diligence.

The first thing that naturally occurs to a Man, upon Enquiries of this Nature, is, I believe, with what Mind and Disposition he first entered on this Holy Office, and how he was qualified to undertake it. For that is the first Question that is asked of every one that is a Candidate for Holy Orders, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve God, for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his People?* And the Answer is, what the Question suggests it should be, *I trust so.* Now considering the Age, Condition, and Circumstances of the Generality of such as enter into Holy Orders, it will be no Violation of either Truth or Charity, to say, that the greatest Part of them by much intend thereby their better Livelihood and Maintenance; they have it in their Aim and View to make their Fortune by it; it is the Means they pitch upon, in order to their End, which is Preferment, and the bettering their Condition in this World. How is it, therefore, that we are to reconcile this End, with the Answer that is made to this Question? For unless we can do this, we shall have little Comfort in our Reflections. If aiming at a worldly Maintenance be not consistent with our being inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon us the Ministry, what an uneasy Struggle must there be within, when we remember that we made that solemn Answer, when we had certainly that worldly End in View? Must we reconcile these things by *Repentance* only? Must we say, that we were young and heedless, and pressed by our Relations and Necessities, and did not enough consider what we were to say, and do, when entering on this Holy Calling; but gave the Answers which the Church prescribes, without examining sufficiently the Questions? But that upon maturer Thoughts, Advance of Years, and more Deliberation, we see we were too hasty, adventured rashly, and now repent, and are concerned we entered into God's Service, by so wrong Steps at first, such selfish Motives, and such worldly Respects; but being in, and finding it a Warfare from which there is no withdrawing, we have endeavoured, by the Grace of God, to make amends by our after Behaviour, Care and painful Diligence in our respective Stations.

This indeed is what must needs be done, and all that can be done, by such as think they have done amiss, and are concerned for doing so: And this is the Repentance that is certainly required, and certainly sufficient, where any one finds the Case to be his own, because it is indeed *All* that can be done in it. But this Repentance, tho' it reconcile a Man to God, yet does not reconcile our saying, *We trust we are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon us the Ministry*, with our being moved by worldly Considerations, if so be those two Movements are truly not consistent, and cannot dwell together. Repentance only blots our Answer out, and tells us we should not, because we could not honestly, have made it, when we did: And it tells us, that were we to begin again, we must not do it: Repentance of having done what we apprehend to have been ill done, does certainly imply our doing it no more, should we have Opportunity. The Difficulty, therefore, still remains upon all others; for the Church still asks that Question, and requires that Answer, that is inconsistent with our aiming at worldly Advantages thereby, if it be not lawful to propose to our selves the obtaining a Livelihood and Maintenance, by going into Holy Orders. And since the Church has made it one of the necessary Terms and Conditions of admitting Men into Orders, and without which she admits none, it will not be amiss to shew that she wants no Vindication in this Matter, that these Conditions are not hard



and unreasonable, nor incompatible with those Desires and Aims, and worldly Prospects that People have, and bring along with them, upon these Occasions.

The Question is not, whether they who are already in the Ministry, may not live by it; for the greatest Authority that ever was, hath told us, that *the labourer is worthy of his hire*, Luke x. vii. and *St. Paul* hath said, that *the Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel*, 1 Cor. ix. 14. and he himself commands *him that is taught in the word, to communicate to him that teacheth in all good things*, Gal. vi. 6. So that this matter is determined beyond all doubt, and the Question only is, whether the Labourer, who is so worthy of his Hire, may enter on that Labour *in prospect of that Hire*? Whether a Man may desire to be qualified to preach the Gospel, in hopes of *living by that Gospel*, since he finds *the Lord hath so ordained*? Whether a Man may desire to become a Teacher of the Word, that he may thereby have such good Things, as he desires and wants, communicated to him by those whom he teacheth? This is the Question, and is neither more nor less than this, Whether a Man may desire a good Office, for the sake of a good Reward (a Temporal Reward) annexed to the Discharge of it, by that very Person who instituted that Office? And setting the Question in this Light, which is indeed the truth of the matter, there can be no difficulty in resolving it. It is Christ the Lord, that hath instituted the Office of the Ministry, and appointed Men to preach the Gospel; and it is the same Lord, that hath appointed the Reward, and hath ordained that they should live by the Gospel: The *Master* therefore hath not separated the *Office* from the *Recompence*, nor the *Labour* from the *Hire*; nor any where, that I can find, required the *Servant* so to do. It is, indeed, not only possible to abstract these things in the Mind, and consider them distinctly, but many both of old, and of late, I doubt not, have actually undertaken the Ministry of the Gospel, without any other Aim than doing good thereby, and with no manner of respect to the *Recompence* of Reward, in this World: That is not the thing in hand, whether it *can be done* by some, nor whether it *has been done*; for certainly it may be done, and has been done, and I dare say, is now done by many excellent People in the World; but the Question is, whether it be *necessary* to be done; whether *it be required* at our hands; whether *All* who enter on the Ministry are obliged not to have these secular Encouragements in view, but only to desire the Office for its own sake, and for the sake of doing God Service therein: And to that I say, the remembring that Christ, who instituted the Office, did also appoint the Reward, is a sufficient Answer; because it is impossible that he should annex a *Recompence* to the Discharge of a Duty, which it should not be lawful to look to, and desire, upon *undertaking* to discharge that Duty; but very lawful to claim that *Recompence* upon *discharging* it, and very lawful to receive it: Nay it is so much due both in Reason, and by Appointment of God, that it becomes sinful for any one to detain it. The matter would not bear the stating and repeating, in any other Instance. The Master says, *the labourer is worthy of his hire*. He calls forth Labourers, and sends them into his Harvests, contracts for Wages with them, and says it is a great Offence for any one to defraud the Labourer of his Hire. Now would one, after all this, think it unlawful for this Labourer to go into the Harvest upon Prospect of this Hire? Does any Man think it unlawful for a Soldier to lift himself into his Prince's Service, for the sake of Pay? Or to undertake any other Office, in hopes of living by it? In all these Cases, no body pretends to scruple at aiming at their worldly Advantage, in their Undertakings. And where is the Difference? Why, one is a sacred and *Spiritual* Office, and the other a *Civil* one; one is concerned in serving the Community, the other in conducting Souls through the Ways of Virtue and Religion, to everlasting Happiness in Heaven. No doubt of it, the Offices are as different as Things can be; they aim

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at the most different Ends; and the Means they use are full as different. There is very little Resemblance betwixt these Things. But that does not at all shew, or make it reasonable, that the Reward and Wages of both these Offices, and Services, should not be the same, in this World. And God, who knew the Difference of these Offices better than we, and the excellent Pre-eminence of his Service above other Civil ones, has yet appointed a worldly Recompence to the Discharge of it, of the same Nature with others, tho' not in the same manner. Reason, Utility, and the Necessity of Things, have annexed proportionable Rewards to the Discharge of Temporal and Civil Offices, which would not be discharged without them. And God, foreseeing that neither Reason nor Utility would sufficiently move Men in their Spiritual Concerns, hath by Command, and positive Appointment, annexed a Temporal Recompence to the Discharge of Spiritual Offices, which neither would, nor could (without a constant Course of Miracles) be otherwise discharged.

Now put these Things together; That the Spiritual Office is of absolute Necessity to the conducting Men to Happiness; and that it is therefore appointed by God: That they, who are to undertake and discharge this Office, are Men; and so many of them, that they cannot live unless they are provided for; and that accordingly God hath provided for them, by making it the Duty of those who are taught, to communicate their good Things to those who teach; by telling us that the Labourer is worthy of his Hire; and that those who preach the Gospel are to live by the Gospel: Put, I say, these Things together, and see, whether the Office of the Ministry being a Spiritual Office, and wholly versed in Things Spiritual, aiming at a Spiritual End, by Means altogether Spiritual, namely, the saving Men's Souls, by preaching the Gospel, and by administering the blessed Sacraments to proper Subjects, be yet a Reason why Men should not aim at Temporal Advantages, by undertaking that Office, since God, who understands the Nature of his own Institutions, and hath instituted this Spiritual Office, hath also annexed these Temporal Advantages to those who are to administer this Office, and knows that Men cannot discharge it, without such Temporal Advantage, and Provision, unless he give them Food from Heaven himself, and preserve them in a miraculous manner, which he hath no where said he would. That Recompence therefore which is due in reason to the Service; that which is due by God's Appointment and Command; that which no Man can detain without Sin; and that without which few or none can enter on the Service, or discharge it; that Recompence, I say, may very innocently and lawfully be made a Motive to the entering on the Service, altho' the Service or Calling be Spiritual.

This, however, will not hinder those who think they can, from acting upon more disinterested Principles, and entering on their Holy Office with no other Aim or View, than doing Glory to God by doing good to Men, in guiding and conducting them to Heaven. No body would discourage those, whose fervent Souls and easy Fortunes in this World have disposed them to enter on the Ministry, without any other Prospect of Reward, than what they expect, and will be sure to find, at God's Hands in Heaven. I am only concerned for those who neither have these Fervours nor Estates, and yet are Candidates for Holy Orders; and concerned to shew, that it is innocent and lawful for such, to come, and bring along with them the Aim and Purpose of living of and *by the Gospel*, if they are found fit, and duly commissioned *to preach the Gospel*. Such, we must own, are they who make up the Body of the Clergy at present, and I believe those who have been before, and those who shall be so hereafter, to the End of Time. And I have dwelt the longer upon it, that we might be clear and without Scruple in the matter; not entering on our Office, nor continuing in it, with that Reluctance and Uneasiness, which we must needs have, if we believe that



that our Desires, and the Necessity of our Affairs, have, or will, put us upon doing what we are not fully satisfied is lawful to do.

The things that have a great Face of Piety, the Propositions that seem more spiritual and exalted, and that are less selfish, are wonderfully taking, and apt to impress upon devout Minds to the begetting Scruple and Error, where there is really no reasonable Ground. Some of the greatest Men of old have, in their Flights, told us, that Men must serve God *for his own Sake*, and do their Duty *out of Love to Virtue*; and that it was a slavish and ignoble Thing to be religious either for *Hope of Recompence*, or *Fear of Punishment*, with Abundance of other fine Lessons, which they would have Men learn in this Life, when in all likelihood they will be the utmost Attainments of pure and perfect Souls in the Life to come. Those, however, who can, or rather think they can, may act upon such generous and noble Principles. But to the ordinary Race of Mankind, methinks it should be enough to say, that God, who understands sufficiently the Importance of Man's Salvation, hath consulted the Passions of *Hope* and *Fear*, which he implanted in him; and to work upon them both, hath promised everlasting *Happiness* in Heaven, to such as will believe and obey the Gospel; and threatened Unbelievers and the impenitent ungodly ones with everlasting *Punishment*. So that it should not seem a slavish thing to do one's Duty, or to turn from Sin, for fear of God's Displeasure and his Punishment; nor yet below any good Christian, to do what God commands, and to repent of having done otherwise, in hopes of reconciling and pleasing him, and being happy. It will be evermore allowed to do what God would have us do, by Principles he hath implanted in us, and upon such Motives as he hath laid down in the Scriptures to move us by; let good devout Writers say what they will.

'Tis a fine thing to say, that spiritual Men should be moved by none but spiritual Considerations, to undertake an Office wholly spiritual. Let those, to whom it is given, receive this Saying. But surely 'tis enough to satisfy the rest, to consider, that God, who instituted our Office, and understands its Nature well, and the Powers of those who are to undertake and exercise this Office, hath annexed a temporal Recompence to the Discharge of it; and therefore that it must be innocent and lawful, for such as present themselves to undergo this Charge, to have their Eye upon this temporal Recompence: Which is the thing that I would shew, and which I have, I hope, shewn *may* be done.

But to this I must also add another thing, that *must* be done by all who intend to enter on this Holy Calling; and that is, that they must bring along with them a full and settled Purpose of glorifying God, by doing the best and utmost Service they can to Men: This they must seriously and earnestly intend: This must be the preparatory Disposition of all their Hearts; this Resolution must be fixed in them, that, together with their Persons, they will dedicate their Hearts, their Time, their Labour, and their best Abilities to God's Service. Without this fix'd Intention, settled Purpose, and confirmed Resolution, of applying themselves with all the Zeal, and Pains, and Diligence they can, to the Discharge of all the Parts of their good Office, in the several Stations and Degrees to which it shall please God to call them, there is no coming or pretending to the Ministry. They will not be able to make one true Answer to all the Questions that the Church, by her proper Officers, makes to them; nor will they ever think of duly qualifying themselves for it.

But it is no otherwise in *this*, than in all other Cases whatever; and therefore there is no unusual Hardship in it. He who has not steadfastly purposed in his Heart to discharge the Office (Civil or Military) he is about to undertake, with all the Care, Fidelity and Skill, that is required, is by no means fit to undertake it; he never will  
discharge



discharge it as he should, because he will never be qualified to do it. He has his Eye upon the Salary and Profits of the Place only, but thinks not of deserving them by doing honestly his Duty; by which means he becomes false to his Trust, and mischievously unjust to the Community, by defrauding them of the Service which they want, and of the Pay that was appointed to reward that Service in another. All this Mischief, as I said, proceeds from a Man's not steadfastly purposing in his Heart, to execute, with all Fidelity, the Office he undertakes, as Reason and Justice require he should; because without this previous Resolution, he will never qualify himself to do so. And it is the same Case with Spiritual and Ministerial Offices and Officers. There must be this Foundation laid, or nothing good will follow or be built thereon. This is the End we must propose, *the Glory of God by doing good to Men*; and then we shall quickly find, that the only Means of compassing this End, will be the providing ourselves with such Abilities and Qualifications as are requisite to the Discharge of the Office we undertake, namely, a good Report for Virtue and Sobriety of Life, and a sufficient Stock of Learning; of whose Degree and Measure, the Governors of the Church are held and appointed to be the best and most competent Judges; who must, however, proceed by Rules prescribed and reasonable, and such as are well known to those who offer themselves as Candidates for Holy Orders.

He therefore that hath seriously, and in good earnest, purposed in his Heart to take upon him the Office and Ministration of a *Deacon*, or the Order of *Priesthood*, with full Intention of serving God, for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his People; and in order to it hath lived, and purposes to live, a Godly and a Sober Life, and to improve in reading and understanding the Holy Scriptures, and other learned Books to fit him more and more for the Discharge of his Duty, he who brings this Disposition along with him, and this Preparation and good Purpose of advancing in Virtue and Knowledge, may very honestly and truly say, that *he trusts he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take the Office he is seeking for upon him*, as well because that, in general, *every good and perfect gift cometh from above*; and that *it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do*; and that without him we can do nothing; and that he it is, who by his special Grace preventing us, does put into our Minds good Desires: As also, in particular, because he is moved to undertake this Office, by Arguments, Authorities, and Motives, derived from the Holy Scriptures, which are the Word of God, and Dictates of the *Holy Ghost*: So that he who is moved by them, is certainly moved by the Holy Ghost; as he who is moved by what I say, either by Word of Mouth, or Writing, is certainly moved by *Me*. We have indeed no other way (ordinary, I mean, and common to us all) of knowing that we are influenced and acted at any time by the Spirit of God, but by finding that what we desire, and what we do, is what we are willed and commanded to desire and do, by the Spirit of God *in the Holy Scriptures*. The Apostles indeed, and first Christian Ministers, had another sort of Call, and *were moved by the Holy Ghost*, in much another way and manner, to undertake the Ministry, than we, or any since those early Days, can pretend to: They had Divine Impulses, Warnings, Admonitions, Invitations, and Calls to the Ministry, such as they could not resist, and such as they themselves were sure came, and must come from God; and they were, most of them, able to convince others also of their Heavenly Mission, by some extraordinary Powers and Abilities they were endued withal, either of Languages, or Prophecy, or curing Sickness or Diseases, or such like. But as we are sure that these extraordinary Calls and Graces of the Holy Spirit were not promised to continue *for ever*, and sure that *in fact* they did not continue *long*, in the Church; so we are sure that this is not the inward Call, and Movement of the Holy Ghost, that the Church enquires after, in the



Question she puts to such as are Candidates for Holy Orders; for that must be something that is promised; and something that is to continue as long as the Church is to continue; and that will be always necessary to its Well-being: And that, I think, is only such a general Influence of God's Spirit, as shall incline a Man's Heart to undertake the Office of the Ministry, and fill him with good Purposes and Resolutions to execute it faithfully, to the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind. This is what is necessary, this is what is promised, this is what we may expect: And he that is not thus far called, he that does not find himself inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, in this Degree and Measure, is very unfit indeed to enter into Holy Orders. But I both hope and believe, there are very few such, as do not come with good Inclinations, and serious Purposes to do their Duty, and answer their Engagements; altho' I fear there are too many that forget them quickly.

It may not, perhaps, be thought so convenient, to have insisted so much upon a Matter that has been so long past, by most of those People who make up the proper Audience upon these Occasions; and to dwell on a Question that has received its Answer so long ago, by most here present. But, as my Purpose is, if it please God to continue my Life, to consider the whole of our Engagement when we enter on the Ministry, so it was necessary to speak to the first Question and Answer that is made, in a more particular Manner; as well because the Question is put in Terms that run exceeding high, and are of much greater *Sound* than *Importance*, and therefore requires to be very well considered and understood; as also because it gave me an Opportunity of reconciling the being *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost* to undertake the Office of the Ministry, with the being moved also at the same time *by the Hopes of living by that Ministry*: Which Difficulty some learned and good Men have rather puzzled and perplexed, than removed; and others have been afraid to speak their Opinions clearly and distinctly, for fear of encouraging a Worldly Spirit too much. But all they have got thereby, has been to beget Scruples in tender Minds, and to make Men afraid, when the Thing is over, that they have not acted upon right Principles. But Truth I think, in this Case, can have no ill Consequences. 'Tis God that instituted the Holy Offices; 'tis God that annexed a Reward to the Performance of them: 'Tis God that puts it into People's Hearts to desire to undertake these Offices, and to qualify themselves for the well-discharging them. How can it therefore be unlawful to desire the Recompence together with the Office, when I do seriously intend to deserve the Recompence as well as I can, by executing and discharging the Office as well as I can also? And how should it be difficult for a serious honest Man, to say he trusts he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to undertake the Office of the Ministry, if he does seriously intend to discharge it carefully and faithfully; and qualifies himself, in the best manner he can, to do so? Since it is from the Holy Scriptures alone (the Dictates of the Holy Ghost) that he learns there is such an Office, and that it is so good and acceptable a thing to God, to teach Men their Duty, and lead them in the Way that bringeth them to everlasting Life; and since no good Desire of doing Good can proceed from any one, but from the Blessed Spirit, *who worketh in us both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure?*

But however, that the insisting so long on the clear Solution of this Question, may not appear to be altogether without its Use, even in Assemblies of this sort, made up of Men who have already given their Answer to it, not to be revoked, it may not be amiss to observe, in a few Words, that the readiest way to find out whether we made a true and proper Answer to this Question, will be, to examine and consider, what our Conduct in the Ministry has been, since we were called to our good Office. It would not, perhaps, be easy for many of those who have been long engaged, to remember the



the particular Frame and Disposition of Mind, with which they entred first upon the Service : But every body's Heart will tell him, how he has behaved himself, in general, in that Service ; so that tho' he should forget his first Resolutions, yet he will certainly remember how he has fulfilled them, or neglected them, since they were made. And it were well, if many of those who have the Satisfaction of remembring that they entred on the Ministry with a right Heart, with holy Purposes, and with a good Degree of Zeal to promote the Glory of God, and the Edification of his People, could not remember also with Concern, how many Checks those Hearts have since given them, for their Forgetfulness, their Carelessness, and faulty Negligence, in the Discharges of their several Duties; what Relaxation of their Vigour, and what Abatement of their Zeal they have experienced, in the practic Part, beyond what they intended or could think would ever happen. This, I doubt, is the Case of most of us, and even of those whose Hearts do best assure them, that they gave a true and proper Answer to the Question, when it was first made.

It may therefore be of use to all of us, to reconsider a Question, whose Answer will furnish us, either with Matter of Thankfulness to God, for guiding and preserving us so long in the good Way; or (which is next to be desired) with Motives to Repentance, and Amendment of our past Miscarriages, and the Renewal of our serious Purposes, and Vows of all Obedience for the future.

N. B.

The following LETTER from My Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, together with the ORDERS and RESOLUTIONS adjoined, were Printed and delivered to the Clergy of this Diocese, in 1716. But, many of them having been either forgotten or neglected, I have again Printed and annexed them to this CHARGE, and do again recommend the due Observation of them, to all who belong to me, and are concerned in them.



T O T H E  
Right Reverend Father in G O D  
T H E  
Lord Bishop of E L Y.

My very GOOD LORD,

**B**EING by the Providence of God called to the Metropolitcal See of this Province, I thought it incumbent upon me to consult as many of my Brethren, the Bishops of the same Province, as were here met together during this Session of Parliament, in what manner we might best employ that Authority, which the Ecclesiastical Laws now in Force, and the Customs and Laws of this Realm, have vested in us, for the Honour of God, and for the Edification of his Church, committed to our Charge: And upon serious Consideration of this matter, we all of us agreed in the same Opinion, that we should, by the Blessing of God upon our honest Endeavours, in some measure promote those good Ends, by taking care (as much as in us lieth) that no unworthy Person might hereafter be admitted into the Sacred Ministry of the Church; nor any be allowed to serve as Curates, but such as should appear to be duly qualified for such an Employ; and that all who officiated in the Room of any absent Ministers, should reside upon the Cures which they undertook to supply; and be ascertained of a suitable Recompence for their Labours.

*In pursuance of those Resolutions, to which we unanimously agreed, I do now very earnestly recommend to you;*

I.

**T**HAT you require of every Person who desires to be admitted to Holy Orders, that he signify to you his Name and Place of Abode, and transmit to you his Testimonial, and a Certificate of his Age duly attested, with the Title upon which he is to be ordained, at least Twenty Days before the time of Ordination; and that he appear on *Wednesday*, or at farthest on *Thursday* in *Ember-Week*, in order to his Examination.

II.

**T**HAT if you shall reject any Person, who applies for Holy Orders, upon the account of Immorality proved against him, you signify the Name of the Person so rejected, with the Reason of your rejecting him, to me within one Month; that so I may acquaint the rest of my Suffragans with the Case of such rejected Person before the next Ordination.

III.

**T**HAT you admit not any Person to Holy Orders, who having resided any considerable Time out of the University, does not send to you, with his Testimonial, a Certificate signed by the Minister, and other credible Inhabitants of the Parish, where



where he so resided, expressing that Notice was given in the Church, in Time of Divine Service, on some *Sunday*, at least a Month before the Day of Ordination, of his Intention to offer himself to be ordained at such a Time; to the end that any Person, who knows any Impediment, or Notable Crime, for the which he ought not to be ordained, may have Opportunity to make his Objections against him.

IV.

THAT you admit no Letters Testimonial, on any Occasion whatsoever, unless it be therein expressed, for what particular End, and Design, such Letters were granted; nor unless it be declared by those who shall sign them, that they have Personally known the Life and Behaviour of the Person for the Time by them certified; and do believe in their Conscience, that he is qualified for that Order, Office, or Employment, to which he desires to be admitted.

V.

THAT in all Testimonials sent from any College or Hall, in either of the Universities, you expect that they be signed, as well as sealed; and that among the Persons signing, the Governor of such College, or Hall, or, in his Absence, the next Person under such Governor, with the Dean, or Reader of Divinity, and the Tutor of the Person to whom the Testimonial is granted, (such Tutor being in the College, and such Person being under the Degree of Master of Arts,) do subscribe their Names.

VI.

THAT you admit not any Person to Holy Orders upon Letters Dimissory, unless they are granted by the Bishop himself, or Guardian of the Spiritualities *Sede vacante*, nor unless it be expressed in such Letters, that he who grants them has fully satisfied himself of the Title, and Conversation of the Person, to whom the Letter is granted.

VII.

THAT you make diligent Enquiry concerning Curates in your Diocese, and proceed to Ecclesiastical Censures against those who shall presume to serve Cures without being first duly Licensed thereunto; as also against all such Incumbents who shall receive and employ them, without first obtaining such Licence.

VIII.

THAT you do not by any means admit of any Minister, who removes from another Diocese, to serve as a Curate in yours, without Testimony of the Bishop of that Diocese, or Ordinary of the peculiar Jurisdiction, from whence he comes, in Writing, of his Honesty, Ability, and Conformity to the Ecclesiastical Laws of the Church of *England*.

IX.

THAT you do not allow any Minister to serve more than one Church, or Chapel, in one Day, except that Chapel be a Member of the Parish Church, or united thereunto; and unless the said Church, or Chapel, where such a Minister shall serve in two Places, be not able in your Judgment to maintain a Curate.

X.

THAT in the Instrument of Licence granted to any Curate, you appoint him a sufficient Salary, according to the Power vested in you by the Laws of the Church, and the particular Direction of a late Act of Parliament for the better Maintenance of Curates.



XI.

THAT in Licences to be granted to Persons to serve any Cure, you cause to be inserted, after the mention of the particular Cure provided for by such Licence, a Clause to this Effect, *or in any other Parish within the Diocese, to which such Curate shall remove with the Consent of the Bishop.*

XII.

THAT you take care, as much as is possible, that whosoever is admitted to serve any Cure, do reside in the Parish where he is to serve; especially in Livings that are able to support a Resident Curate: And where that cannot be done, that they do at least reside so near to the Place, that they may conveniently perform all their Duties both in the Church and Parish.

*THESE, My Lord, were the Orders and Resolutions, to which we all agreed; and which I do hereby transmit to you; desiring you to communicate them to the Clergy of your Diocese, with an Assurance that you are resolved, by the Grace of God, to direct your Practice, in these Particulars, agreeably thereunto. And so commending you to the Blessing of God in these, and all your other pious Endeavours for the Service of his Church, I heartily remain,*

My very Good LORD,

Your truly affectionate Brother,

WESTMINSTER,  
June 5, 1716.

W. CANT.



*F I N I S.*



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